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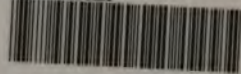
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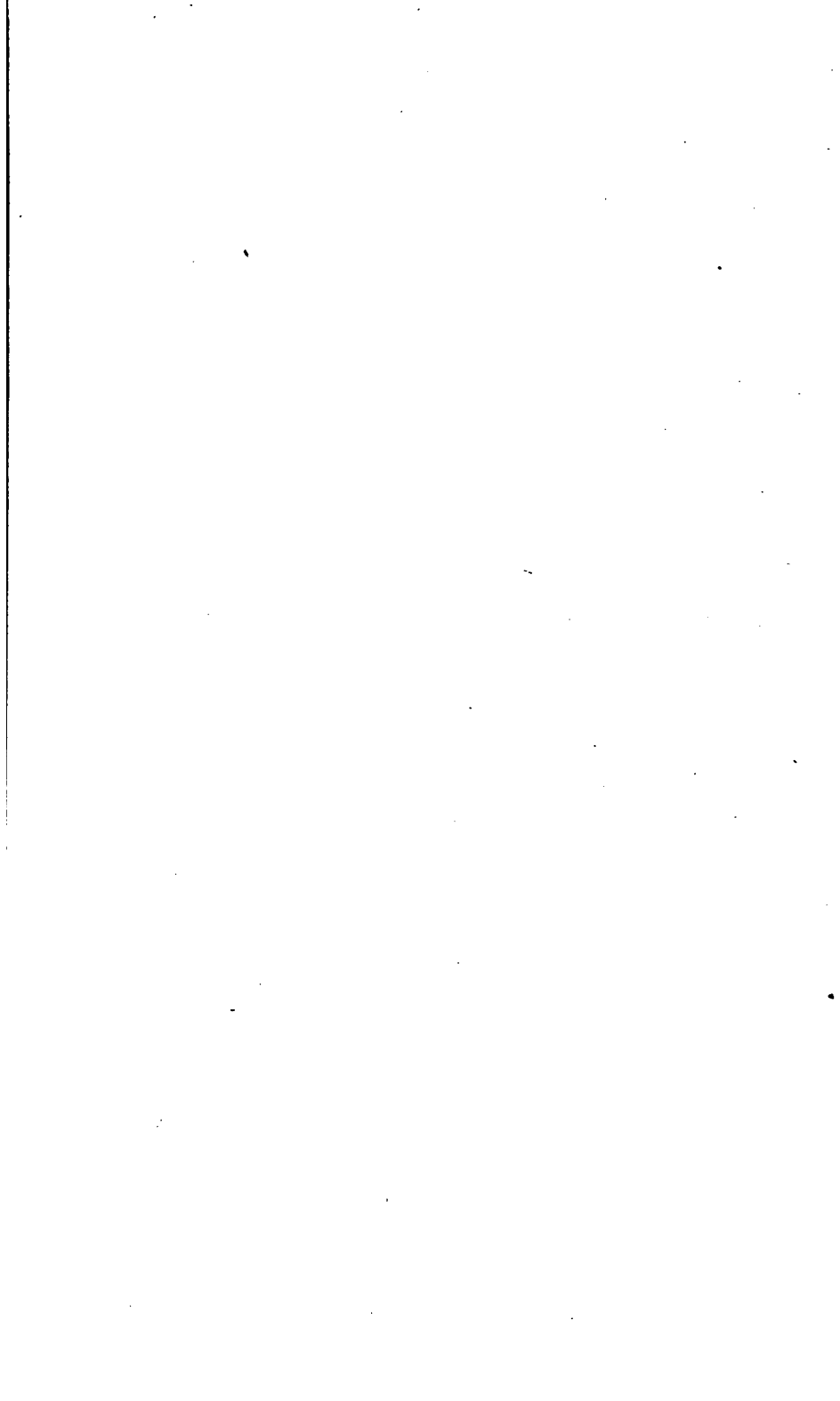
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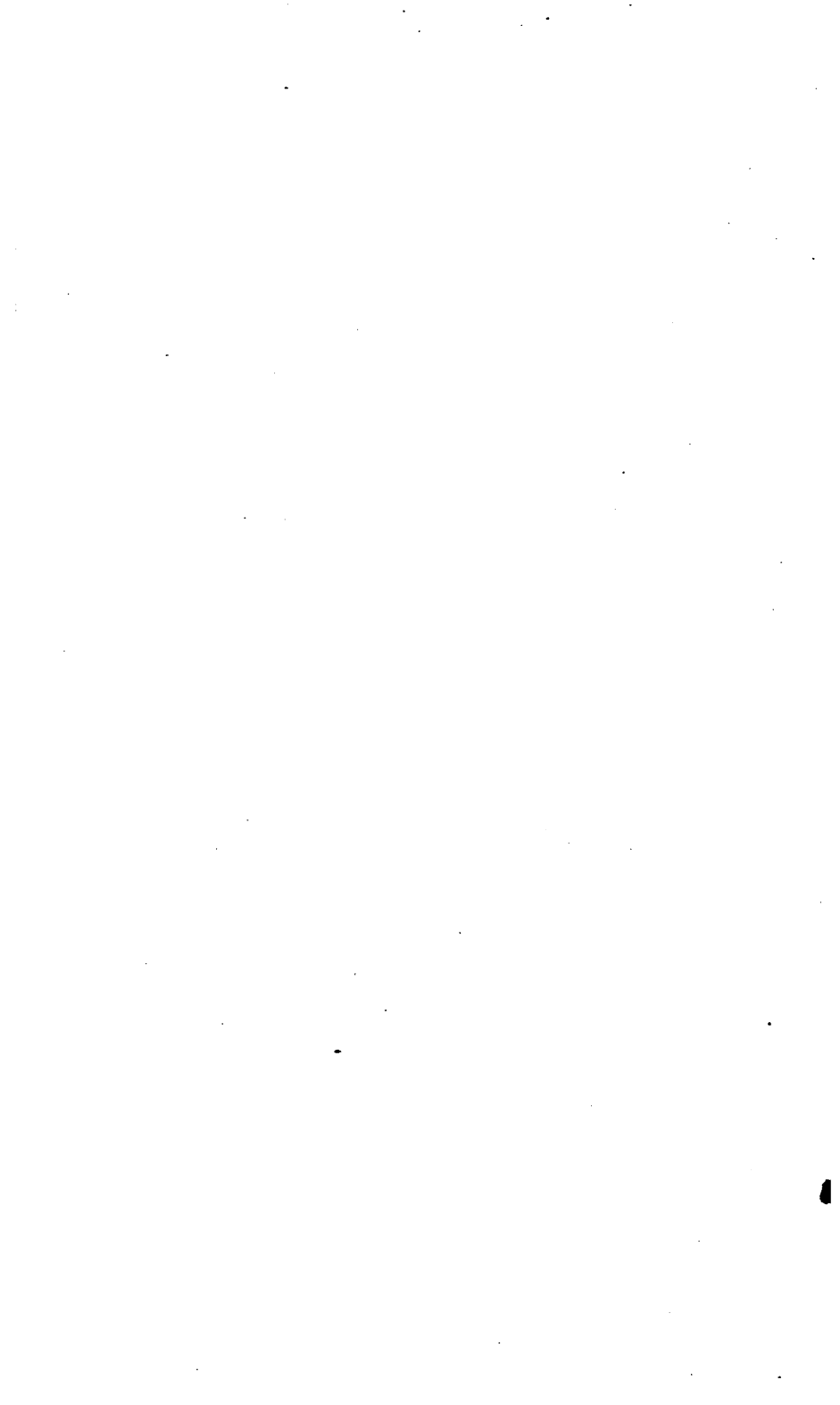




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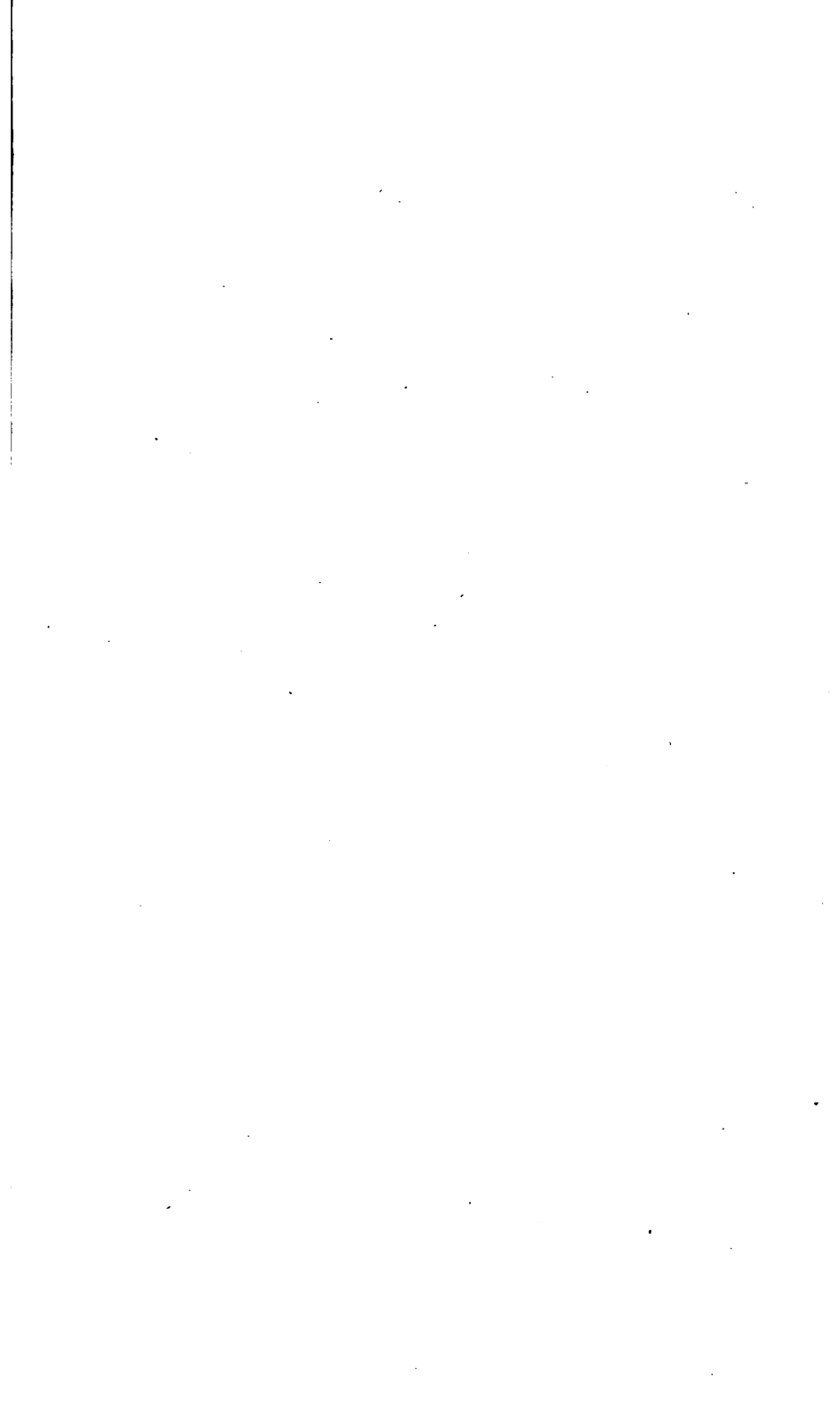
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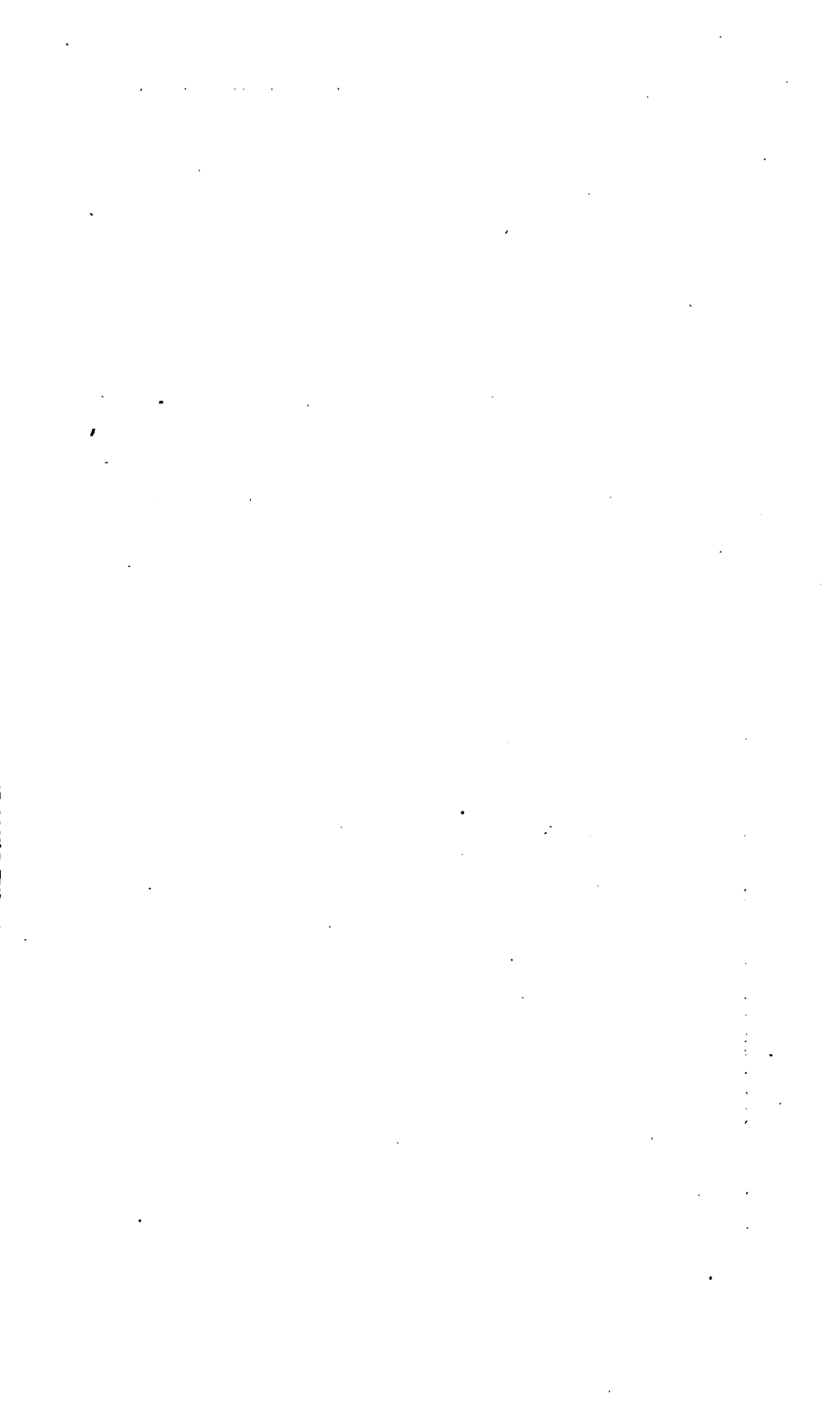
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*Sed. Hall, 1846*

FIELD SPORTS

OF

THE NORTH OF EUROPE,

&c.

CHAPTER I.

Setting-in of the winter.—Winter clothing.—Frozen feet.—
Removal to Lapp Cottage.—My new Landlord ; his farm, &c.
—Intelligence of Bears being ringed.—Disappearance of
Birds of Passage.—Visit to Jan Finne.—Jan Svensson.

THE weather was now rather severe. Indeed, on the morning and evening of the 28th and 29th October, we had 12 degrees of cold according to the scale of Fahrenheit : at this period, however, there was no snow upon the ground.

The peasants at this time were generally attired in their winter garments. This, for the females, consisted of short jackets, made of sheepskins, with the woolly side inwards ; and for the men, of coats of the same material. Over this, which was called *pele*, the latter often wore, when at church, or on other occasions, their ordinary coats.

The greater part of the men were provided with gloves, to which no fingers were attached, reaching half-way up their arms. These, which were frequently made of white wool, and handsomely embroidered, were of so great a size, as much to resemble gauntlets. They were capital preservatives against the cold.

My own dress, when in the forest at this period of the year, with the exception of the "pels" which I never made use of, was very similar to that of the peasants. It consisted of a straight coat without a collar, which reached to my knees, and buttoned well about my neck; trowsers, warm stockings, and gaiters. It was composed of coarse cloth, the manufacture of the country, the cost of which was the merest bagatelle. In this dress, however, which was well lined throughout, I was able, when using exercise, to set the weather, let it be ever so severe, almost at defiance.

My favourite colours were green and gray. The former is perhaps the best for the summer season, when a person is on sporting excursions, as it more nearly resembles the foliage of the trees; the latter for the winter, when, all nature being clothed in frost and snow, a man, if standing still, may in the distance readily be taken for the trunk of a pine. Some attention should be paid to this point, for the eye of a bird or beast is quickly caught by any object, the colour of

which materially differs from the surrounding scenery.

I seldom wore linen shirts in the winter-time, but substituted, in their stead, such as were made of fine flannel: these are the greatest preservatives of health in a cold climate, when using violent exercise.

I rarely made use of a hat at that season; for, unlike the peasants, my hair was cut quite short, and in consequence, had I had no other covering for my head, my ears would soon have been frost-bitten. I therefore always substituted a cap in lieu of that article of dress: the peasants nevertheless generally wore their hats the whole of the winter.

When I was in the forest, I was commonly habited in a cap of the same colour and materials as my clothes. To this, three lappets were attached; two of a small size, one on either side, to fall over my ears, which guarded them from the effects of the cold; and the third, about six inches square, was fastened behind, and in a degree prevented the *snow*, which at times came from the trees almost in avalanches, from penetrating down my neck. These lappets were removable at pleasure, by turning them under the lining of the cap, and in consequence I only made use of them in snowy and severe weather.

I usually wore very similar shoes to the peasants: the cost of a pair was less than two-and-

sixpence. The soles of these were very thick, and were composed, with the exception of the outer part, which was of leather, of many layers of the bark of the birch-tree. Shoes made on this construction were supposed to afford much greater warmth than those on the common principle. The grand secret, however, of keeping the feet warm in cold countries, is to have one's shoes sufficiently roomy and large, which prevents the circulation of the blood from being impeded.

I was obliged to pay a good deal of attention to my feet, as, owing to neglect during the first season I passed in Scandinavia, they were frost-bitten.

This happened one day that I was in the forest, in the early part of the winter, the weather at the time being excessively severe. I was crossing some morasses, which were insufficiently frozen, when, from not picking my steps, I was soon half-leg deep in water. To this I paid little attention, having all my life been accustomed to similar exposure. Subsequently I felt a greater degree of cold in my feet than I had ever before experienced; but it was not until several hours afterwards, and then more from curiosity than any idea of danger, that I was led to examine into the state of them. It was well that I did so, for I now discovered that one of my feet was severely frozen, and the other slightly so.

I could not, however, get off my shoes without the assistance of a knife; and even then, from being firmly attached to the stockings, a large portion of the latter was carried along with them. Such parts of my feet as were affected were quite white, as hard as stone, and without any sensation whatever; so much so, that, on striking them sharply with a stick, not the slightest feeling was excited; but, on the application of snow, with which my attendant rubbed them, the blood fortunately resumed its circulation.

Subsequently, a little inflammation came on, and though not sufficient to confine me to the house, I was unable to take exercise, with any very great degree of comfort, for some time afterwards; the skin, on the parts that had been affected, turned black, and came away, but this was not until after the lapse of a week or two. Throughout the winter, and up to this very day, my feet have remained tender and susceptible of cold. Indeed, every one tells me, that, as long as I live, I shall feel them to tingle in severe weather.

I have been thus particular, because there may be others like myself, who have been accustomed to expose themselves to wet and cold, without thinking of the consequences. In our climate, this may do very well; but in the more northern regions, too much caution cannot be taken. In my case, there was no great harm done, it is true;

but perhaps if I had neglected to examine my feet for a few hours longer, which was nearly being the case, I might have been laid up all the winter ; and even worse consequences might have ensued.

When on a journey, I was provided with a large boat-cloak, which I had caused to be lined throughout with sheepskins. Thus equipped, I could almost laugh at the weather, let it be ever so severe. Indeed, though I have travelled much in Scandinavia during the winter season, from having suitable clothing, I never experienced one-tenth part of the cold and misery as when making long journeys on tops of mails and coaches in England.

The Swedish gentry usually wore a more costly travelling dress than that of which I am speaking. It commonly consisted of a cloak, lined with some kind of fur, or made altogether of wolf-skins ; but as these were expensive, and as they did not answer the required purpose one whit better, I contented myself with the expedient I had adopted, the cost of which was less than a pound. In addition to furs, it was usual with every one, when travelling, to draw a pair of immensely large boots, lined either with fur or wool, over those which he commonly wore. These, however, I usually dispensed with, when in my forest dress.

On the night of the 31st of October, a little snow fell, and the next morning the ground was covered with it, to about the depth of an inch. Its coming thus early was a fortunate circumstance; for, as I afterwards learnt, it enabled the peasants to *ring** more than one bear.

These animals, as I have said, retire to their winter-quarters about the beginning of November. If, therefore, there be snow upon the ground, this is the proper time to range the forest in search of their tracks.

For a while afterwards, the weather remained clear and cold, during which, I made one or two short excursions with my gun, in the vicinity of my quarters; but I only killed two or three black-cock and capercali. Wild-fowl, woodcocks, snipes, &c. had now all taken their departure, and either gone farther to the southward, or proceeded to more genial climates. The black and white (or royston) crow, larks, &c. had also disappeared.

For reasons which it is unnecessary for me to mention, I now took my leave of Stjern, and removed some two or three miles farther to the northward, to a retired cottage called Lapp-torp. This was so named, it was said, from some of those wandering people having formerly been its occupants. It was rather romantically situated at no

* The meaning of this term is explained at page 162, of the first volume.

great distance from the eastern bank of the Klar, the surrounding scenery partaking of a bold and picturesque character.

My new landlord was named Nils Jonsson. Though he complained of the land being sterile, he was possessed, in appearance, of a snug little farm. He had also a good house and offices. He was a tenant of the Uddeholm Company.

This man, however, was in much poorer circumstances than my former host at Stjern. It was said this was owing in a great degree to his own want of management. He was an honest, good-natured creature; and, if he had not made too frequent application to the brandy-bottle, would have been a favourite of mine, for he was exceedingly civil and obliging.

Here I obtained a pretty good, though rather small room; but as it was light and cheerful, and commanded some little prospect, it was an agreeable exchange from my dungeon-like abode at Stjern.

The ceiling and sides of my new apartment were painted all over with scenes described in Holy Writ; the like performances are to be met with in the houses of the peasantry throughout the interior of the country. Natives of Dalecarlia are said to be the artists; but the drawings in general reflect little credit on their tastes, as they are the greatest daubs possible.

Several quotations from Scripture were inscrib-

ed against the walls of my room : one, from “ Proverbs,” to the following effect :—“ Through wisdom is an house builded ; and by understanding it is established : and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.”

Towards the middle of November, I obtained intelligence of several bears, which, it was reported, were safely ringed : one at some distance to the eastward of Sälje, a hamlet situated at about seven miles to the northward of Lapp cottage ; the others, consisting of a she-bear, with cubs, near to Tönnet, a village at some seven miles farther to the northward.

The first, or Sälje bear, had been roused from his winter-quarters by two men, who were in the forest for the purpose of shooting hazel-hens. They were in a very thick brake, the usual resort for those birds, when one of them suddenly came close upon the animal, as he lay coiled up in his lair. The peasant had only small shot in his gun ; and therefore, not thinking it prudent to fire, he retreated upon his companion, who was at some little distance. Both then loaded with ball, when they advanced up to the bear. In the interim, however, the animal had taken the alarm, and wisely walked himself off.

There was the merest sprinkling of snow upon the ground at this time, from which cause the people were four days before they could succeed in

encircling him. This bear was supposed to be the same of which I have spoken as having been in search of during the preceding summer.

The latter, or Tönnet bears, had, in the first instance, been disturbed from their den by two men who were felling timber in the forest, but owing to the ground being bare of snow in places, it took two days before they could succeed in ringing the animals.

At this period I was without an attendant ; but as there was now no time to be lost, I forthwith proceeded to Jan Finne, of whom I have made honourable mention, to obtain his assistance in attacking the bears of which I had just received intelligence.

This man resided in a very wild and desolate part of the forest, at about thirty-five miles to the north-west of Lapp cottage ; but, on my reaching his habitation, I was sorry to find he was absent from home. On the following day, however, I was fortunate enough to fall in with him at Tönnet ; near to which place the she-bear, with her cubs, were ringed.

As the ground was then nearly bare of snow, we did not think it advisable to attack those animals at that time ; as, had we roused, and not succeeded in killing them, it was not improbable their tracks might have been lost, and that in consequence they might have got off altogether. Jan Finne and myself, therefore, separated for our

respective homes ; but I gave him orders to meet me at Tönnet, the moment there should be a fall of snow, which, from the advanced state of the season, we thought could not be very far distant.

On my return to Lapp cottage, I found the most celebrated of the Dalecarlian chasseurs awaiting my arrival.

This man's name was Jan Svensson ; he was between fifty and sixty years of age, and blind of one eye, it having been knocked out in the forest at a time, it was said, when his head was too full of brandy. He was small in person, but his heart lay in the right place. He had been accessory to the death of sixty or seventy bears, very many of which he had killed himself. At this time, however, his day was passed ; for, probably in consequence of a too great indulgence in his favourite liquor, he was little capable of any severe exertion ; and, though not very far advanced in life, he had the appearance of a worn-out and decrepit old man.

Svensson had been twice wounded by bears ; once under the following circumstances :—

On a certain occasion, himself, and five or six other peasants, had ringed a very large bear, which had previously been much hunted and shot at ; when, placing his companions in ambush around the ring, he advanced alone upon the track of the animal, for the purpose of rousing him. Svensson had a capital dog, which, the moment it was

slipped from its couplings, dashed towards the bear, and soon had him on foot. As Svensson had anticipated, the beast made towards his companions; one of whom got a shot at, and desperately wounded him in the side; the ball indeed only missed his heart by a few inches.

This injury the bear quickly revenged; for, dashing at his assailant, whose efforts to escape were fruitless, he laid him prostrate, and wounded him severely in the arms and back. Indeed, the poor fellow would probably have been *minus* of his scalp, had it not been for his hat, which the animal perforated with his teeth in seven different places.

There the mischief, as regarded this man, ended, for the attacks of the dog at last caused the bear to leave his fallen foe.

The beast now retraced his steps into the ring, and soon came in contact with Svensson, who happened to be following upon the animal's tracks. He was in a gallop, and came end on, to use the man's own expression, like a horse. But when he was at about thirty paces distance, Svensson discharged his rifle, and with so good an aim, that the bear directly fell.

Svensson might now have got out of the way with every facility; but, thinking the bear was either dead or desperately wounded, he commenced reloading his rifle: he had only placed

the powder in the barrel, however, when the animal got on his legs again, and, fixing his eyes upon him, made right at him.

Svensson now endeavoured to elude the attack, by springing on one side,—a manœuvre which is often attended with success on like occasions ; but the bear still kept pursuing him, and two or three doubles that he made were equally unsuccessful. Finding escape was impossible, Svensson therefore stood still, and when the bear came up to him, which he did on all-fours like a bull, he attempted to drive the muzzle of his gun down the throat of the enraged brute. But the bear laying hold of the gun, instantly wrested it out of Svensson's hand, when, seizing him by the arm, he bit him severely.

The dog was not an idle spectator of what was going forward ; for, seeing the jeopardy in which his master was placed, he gallantly fixed on the bear's hind-quarters. To get rid of this assailant, however, and not caring to quit his hold of Svensson, the bear threw himself on to his back, making with the one paw a dash at the dog, and with the other holding Svensson, who was of course uppermost, fast in his embraces. This he repeated three several times, handling the poor man, to use his own expression, with as much ease as a cat would a mouse. In the intervals, between these manœuvres, he was either occupied in biting

Svensson in different parts of the body, or he was standing still as if stupified with the desperate wounds he had received.

In this dreadful situation, Svensson thinks he must have remained for upwards of *half an hour*, and during all this time his gallant dog never ceased his attacks on the bear for a moment. At last the bear quitted him, and moving slowly to a small tree, at a few paces distant, seized it with his teeth; but he was in his last agonies, and presently fell dead on the ground.

Some little time afterwards, several of Svensson's companions came up to the spot; which they had previously been prevented from doing, in consequence of the distance, and the loose state of the snow. Only one of them was near enough to have rendered him assistance. This was the man the bear had previously so much injured; who was thought by Svensson to have received his *quietus*, both as regarded the inclination, as well as the ability, to assist him.

On this occasion, Svensson was wounded in thirty-one different places, but principally, in the arms and legs. At one time, the bear seized him by the stomach, but luckily only carried away some of his clothes with his teeth. All the wounds were inflicted with the *teeth*, and none with the *claws*; which is a little corroborative of what I have said, when speaking of the man-

ner in which a bear makes his attacks upon the human race.

On examining the bear, it was found that Svensson's balls—his rifle having been loaded with two, a common custom in Scandinavia—had gone almost into the same hole ; this was just between the eyes ; but from the balls being very small, though they had fractured, yet they had not penetrated the skull : had they taken effect an inch higher, where the bone is thin, the beast would have been dead in an instant.

If any thing was required to show the insufficiency of small balls for bear-shooting, what I have just related must, I think, set the matter at rest ; for, I take it, if Svensson's balls had been of a moderate size, they would have shattered the skull to pieces, and, in consequence, have saved him the dreadful mauling he was destined to endure.

This same bear had in the early part of the winter most desperately wounded a man in the parish of Appelbo in Dalecarlia, who, with several others, was pursuing him ; and of the injuries he received on that occasion, it was supposed, he died sometime afterwards.

In the other instance, when Svensson was wounded, it happened in the following manner :—

Along with several others, he was one day pursuing a she-bear, whom they had deprived of

her cubs on that very morning. But, their dog not keeping well up with that animal, and not knowing, in consequence, where she was at the moment, they suddenly came to within a few paces of her in a thick brake. The beast, on getting sight of the party, set up a hideous growl, and dashed at them at the top of her speed.

They were taken completely by surprise, and, as their guns were not in readiness, they were unable to offer any resistance. The first man the bear made for, avoided her attacks by throwing himself into the snow; but Svensson was not so fortunate, for, unable to get out of the way, she quickly laid him prostrate, and wounded him in several places.

His dog, however, saved Svensson on this occasion from farther injury; for, coming up to the scene of action, he fixed on the bear, and caused her to leave the poor fellow. The beast then went off, at the gallop, over Svensson's body; and he described her weight to be none of the lightest, when she was presently lost sight of in the thicket.

On this occasion, the bear made good her retreat; though, a few days subsequently, Svensson and his companions managed to kill her.

CHAPTER II.

Snow-storm. — Sledge. — Journey to Tönnet. — Anecdotes. — Winter roads. — Snow-Plough. — Soned Larsson. — Per Jons-son. — Superstition. — Bears attacking horses. — Capercali shooting.

ON the 22nd of November we had twenty-two degrees of cold at sunrise; on the 23rd, twenty-nine; on the 24th, thirty-four; on the 25th, twenty-nine; on the 26th, thirty-four; on the 27th, twenty-nine; and on the 28th, the like number of degrees. From that time, up to the beginning of the ensuing month, from some oversight, I kept no memorandum of the temperature. The weather was not very severe during all this while; and since the night of the 31st of October we did not experience one iota of either snow or rain, which was a rather singular circumstance at that season of the year.

Tuesday the 4th of December, however, to my great satisfaction, was ushered in with a storm of snow; and by the middle of the day the ground was covered with it to the depth of four or five

inches. This was a gratifying sight to me; and thinking it was now time for action, I made the few requisite preparations, and on the evening of the same day, together with Svensson and my dogs, I was off in my sledge for Tönnet, which Jan Finne and myself had fixed upon as the place of our rendezvous.

My sledge, which was built in Finland, differed altogether in shape from those in common use in this part of the country, and was so long, that I was enabled, if I pleased, to recline at nearly my full length. In fact, with the addition of a bear-skin thrown over the back of the sledge, it was the most luxurious vehicle imaginable, and very superior indeed, in point of comfort, to any wheel-carriage in which it was ever my fortune to ride.

To the harness, as is customary in the North of Europe, a set of bells were attached, the music of which was not only very pleasing to the ear, but it served to warn others of our approach, which, from our gliding so silently over the snow, would not otherwise have been perceptible at times.

The accompanying sketch will give a better idea of my sledge, &c. than any written description.



The scenery on our way to Tönnet much resembled that in the vicinity of my quarters. The valley through which the Klar, whose course we followed, meandered, was studded with little farms and hamlets, and, where the soil was favourable, it was in a tolerable state of cultivation; whilst the hills, which on either hand rose to a considerable height, were covered with boundless forests of pine; but instead of the wild waste of evergreens which presented itself to the eye on the preceding day, all nature was at this time wrapped in her wintry mantle of snow, which made the contrast very striking.

The Klar was now generally frozen over, and our route often lay along its surface; but the ice

was not in a very secure state. Indeed, we occasionally passed immediately near to holes where the water was entirely open. Many of these openings in the ice were owing to the rapidity of the stream preventing the water from congealing; whilst others, called *windwak*, were supposed to originate from air, that had either been confined beneath the surface of the ice when congelation took place, or that subsequently found its way there.

In the early part of this winter, many accidents happened in the Klar. In fact, I heard of no less than nine persons, two belonging to the parish of Exshärad, and seven to that of Ny, both of which were at no great distance from my quarters, having been drowned in that river.

Among the poor sufferers was a peasant girl, who had been married on the morning of the very day on which the catastrophe took place. In spite of her melancholy end, however, it was said, (though I hope not truly,) that the banquet prepared for the occasion was done ample justice to by the party assembled to celebrate the nuptials. Thus the bridal was converted into the funeral feast.

In another instance, two or three peasants were in a sledge after it was dark, when the horse, diverging from the beaten route, approached so immediately near to a *windwak* (as was seen by his track the next day), that though by swerving

to the one side he escaped himself, the sudden jerk threw the people out of the sledge into the opening, where they all met a watery grave.

The shoes of our horse were at this time roughed, or turned up, which was universally the case with all these animals thereabouts. This was done so effectually, that were the ice as slippery as glass, which was oftentimes the case in the winter-season, they could proceed even at the gallop with the greatest possible safety.

For the greater part of the distance to Tönnet we kept the winter-way (winter vägen). This was so called in contradistinction to those commonly made use of in the summer season. Independently of this being more level, it was the less circuitous of the two. When it happened to lie along the course of a river, lake, morass, or extensive waste, it was distinctly marked out by branches of the pine, or by the tree itself, being placed in an upright position at intervals of some forty or fifty paces apart from each other. This precaution was very necessary, as it enabled the traveller as well to keep the route either during, or immediately subsequent to a snow-storm, as to avoid springs and other dangerous places,

Routes similar to the above are usually to be met with in all the northern parts of Scandinavia during the winter; and when the morasses, rivers, lakes, &c. are firmly frozen over, these often cross the country in almost as direct a line as the crow

flies, which is of no little advantage to the traveller. In many instances, in fact, during that season, the ordinary, or summer roads, are almost or altogether disused.

From the great quantity of snow that often falls in the northern regions at this inclement period of the year, the roads would soon be rendered impracticable were it not for *ploughs* of a very simple shape, that we made use of to remove it.

These are constructed of two broad and tolerably thick planks, forming nearly the two sides of a triangle, which are kept in their proper position by transverse bars.

In the woodcut depicting my sledge, &c. introduced at page 19, is the representation of a snow-plough, which will give a tolerable idea of those very useful implements.

On all the principal roads in Scandinavia, and on many of the minor ones also, these ploughs are kept at stated distances; and when there is a heavy fall of snow, the peasants in the surrounding districts are obliged to furnish horses to remove it. If the road be narrow, the ploughs are usually of a small size, and one or two horses in that case are commonly sufficient to work it; but if the road should be wide, and the plough, in consequence, of a larger size, then several horses may be requisite.

I have been surprised that these ploughs are

not made use of in England, in the event of a deep fall of snow, for they are constructed in an hour, and are worked with every facility.

Though the distance to Tönnet was only about fourteen miles, owing to the darkness of the night, and to the track being heavy from the new-fallen snow, it was near ten o'clock before we reached that place. Here we had expected to meet Jan Finne, agreeably to our appointment; but on our arrival we were much disappointed to find he had not at that time made his appearance. Thinking, however, that this would shortly be the case, we took up our quarters for the night with a peasant named Soned Larsson.

This man was in very good circumstances; indeed, it was said he was the wealthiest of his class, in the district of Elfvedal. He had a very good farm, and was possessed of abundance of horses, cows, sheep, &c. His father, a fine healthy old man upwards of ninety, was living with him. I believe, there were four generations of the family in the house.

In my wanderings through the forest I often met with people who had attained to a great age. I remember seeing one woman who was upwards of one hundred and two years of age, but whose sight was still so good that she was spinning without the use of glasses.

The succeeding morning, Wednesday 5th of December, was fine and frosty; but Jan Finne

not being forthcoming, and being careless of losing the advantage of such favourable weather, I struck into the forest to the eastward of Tönnet, in search of capercali.

My guide, on this occasion, was a peasant, named Per Jonsson, an excellent shot with his rifle, and the best chasseur to be found thereabouts. We had not proceeded far, however, before he halted so suddenly, and in so peculiar a manner, as almost led me to suppose he had seen either an apparition or a drove of wolves; but, on questioning him as to the cause of his panic, it turned out he had viewed in the distance a poor decrepit old woman, "outlived," as he called her, (*utlevad kärring*); and from this being the first human being that he had set his eyes upon since we had started, he drew the most unfavourable prognostics as to our chances of success. Indeed, he stated it next to useless for us to proceed, alleging as a proof of such being the case, that some few days before, when, on a like expedition, he had encountered a similar bad omen; and in consequence, though he fell in with a good many birds, and wasted no little powder and ball, he was never able, from their being "charmed," to touch a feather.

On another occasion, when I was travelling, I remember my driver pointing out to me a huge fragment of rock lying near to the road-side, on which, he stated, the impression of a hand and

that of an iron chain, were deeply indented. He accounted for these marks in a singular manner. An evil spirit, he said, once dwelt in a cavern near to the summit of a lofty hill in the vicinity ; but feeling very indignant at hearing the neighbouring church bells chiming, as they were wont to do on Sundays, &c. he put this missile in a sling, and threw it with all his force at the steeple. The demon missed his mark, however, and the rock, passing a mile beyond the church, fell at the place where I saw it deposited. My informant seemed fully to believe this, as well as other similar stories, of which he had treasured up a sufficiency, that he narrated.

Mr. Greiff says, that “some of the peasants are so simple as to go twenty or thirty miles to find out a spring which runs to the north, in order to let the spring-water run through the gun-barrel, while they in the mean while say, ‘Shoot west—shoot east—shoot south—shoot north,’ when the cure is effected. It is also considered a good cure for a gun that does not kill, to put a serpent into the barrel, and shoot it out ; in doing which, it has also happened that many barrels have been burst. Several other such fooleries might be mentioned.”

That gentleman states, “that the peasantry in general believe in witchcraft, and that a good and lucky sportsman can shoot as much as he wishes, and call to him beast and bird, as soon as he has

attained to that degree that he has become acquainted with the Lady of the Wood.—Once from necessity," he says, "I had occasion to show my art of witchcraft. I had, by means of my good partridge-dog, (Caresse,) brought to a stand and shot three deer, of which two lay on the spot, and the third at a short distance. Three peasants, with hatchets to fell trees thereabout, came in a friendly manner and saluted me. They knew me well; but when they began to consider whether it was not their land on which the deer lay, I was necessitated to let them understand that I was acquainted with the Lady of the Wood. I had my horses at a hut a short way off, whence I was obliged to fetch them, in order to carry away the deer as fast as possible. In the mean time, I requested one of the peasants to remain, after I had with much ceremony, in the sight of all, plucked a tuft of hair from the largest deer and laid it on the gun-case, gone three times round each deer, and laid a cross on them of wooden pegs, which were split in three places at one end. I then directed him who staid behind to seat himself on the deer until I returned, that no harm should happen to him; which advice he took and followed, and I carried off my deer without opposition."

I mention these anecdotes to show, that the Swedish peasantry, like our own, are far from being exempt from idle and superstitious notions.

My guide's brother, whose Christian name was Lars, during the early part of the preceding summer, met with a rather singular adventure; the scene of it lay at only some eight or nine miles to the north-east of Tönnet.

One morning, at a very early hour, he and another peasant proceeded to a "Svedgefall," in the vicinity of a "Sätterwall," where they had quartered during the preceding night, for the purpose of shooting hares; as, in such situations, for the sake of feeding upon the young grass, these animals are commonly to be found in the spring of the year.

At this pasturage several horses were grazing, one of which a large bear had that instant attacked and desperately wounded. With one of his terrible paws the ferocious brute kept his hold of the poor horse, whilst with the other he was endeavouring to retard his farther progress, (for being a rather large and powerful animal he succeeded for some little distance in dragging his enemy along with him,) by grasping at the surrounding trees. On seeing the peasants, however, making towards him,—for there was little cover in the immediate vicinity of the spot,—the bear quitted his hold of the horse, and retreated into the adjoining forest, and there also the latter took refuge.

But the bear was not to be so disappointed of his prey; for, by the time the peasants had pene-

trated a short distance into the brake,—which they did rather under the idea of rendering the horse the assistance of which he stood so much in need, than of again seeing the bear,—the latter had renewed his attacks upon the poor animal, who now, from being already disabled from wounds and loss of blood, was soon brought to the ground.

The beast's career, however, was speedily at an end, though this was not until the horse had received so much injury that he died shortly afterwards, for the peasants coming up to the spot in double quick time, presently succeeded with their guns in destroying him.

This bear was supposed to be the same that had committed several similar depredations a short time previously ; and his skin, which was a moderately large one, subsequently came into my own possession.

Circumstances something similar to the above not unfrequently happen in the Scandinavian forests ; and I have heard it asserted that the bear, when thus carried along by the horse, and when in his attempts to retard the progress of the poor animal, by grasping with one of his paws at the surrounding trees and bushes, not uncommonly tears them up by the roots. Should the bear succeed, however, in catching hold of a tree that is firmly embedded in the soil, it is then all over with his victim ; for, owing to his enormous

muscular strength, the career of the horse is at once stopped, and he is quickly brought to the ground.

It seems rather extraordinary that so clumsy and ill-shaped a looking brute as a bear should be able to run down a horse ; but such, whether owing to the fears of the animal, or to the advantages of ground, is beyond doubt of every-day occurrence. Until he has brought his victim down, it is said, the bear seldom makes use of his teeth, but strikes his prey on the back and sides with his terrible paws, as if with a sledge-hammer. Sometimes, I take it, the horse, by flinging out behind, makes his escape ; for it is not an uncommon circumstance for a bear to be killed, wanting an eye or a fang, which the peasants suppose, and with some reason, has been caused by the heels of horses.

Now and then a horse is to be found in Scandinavia that is not afraid of a bear, and I have heard of more than one instance where that useful animal has defended himself successfully against the attacks of those ferocious brutes. On these occasions, it is said, the bear keeps wheeling round the horse with the endeavour to take him at disadvantage ; whilst the latter parries the assaults of his assailant as well with his fore-feet as with his heels. The scene of action is therefore usually confined to a small space, and from the manner in which the ground is trodden down, and

turned up, about the spot, there is reason to suppose these apparently unequal contests have at times been of hours' continuance. I heard of one horse, in particular, that had in several instances greatly distinguished himself in these combats with Bruin.

The wounds that the bear inflicts upon cattle, when he attacks them, are sometimes dreadful to look upon; indeed, I myself saw a living horse that had been within the clutches of one of those ferocious brutes some few days previously, but from which he had been rescued, owing to an accidental circumstance; in the back and neck of the poor steed, were holes of such a size, that, without exaggeration, I could almost have buried my hand in them; this horse died a few days subsequently.

The sufferings of animals, when attacked by a bear, or other wild beast, must often be horrible. I have heard of nearly the whole of the hind-quarters of a cow or a horse having been actually devoured, and yet the poor creatures had been found alive.

To proceed.—Though my guide and myself beat a considerable tract of ground during the day, we only fell in with a very few capercali; but I was fortunate enough to bag three of those birds in spite of Per's predictions to the contrary.

There was much snow in the trees at that time;

this was greatly in our favour ; for the vision of the birds being thereby obstructed, we were enabled to approach them the better, when my Brunette challenged to them in the pines.

In the evening, when we had twenty-two degrees of cold, we returned to Tönnet, where, shortly afterwards Jan Finne made his appearance.

As there were now four or five inches of snow upon the ground, and of course a sufficiency for tracking, we determined upon beating the ring for the she-bear and her cubs ; but we were not by any means certain that those animals were within it, for subsequently to their being encircled some three weeks previously, the forest had in places been altogether bare of snow, so that they could have moved themselves off to another part of the country, without leaving a track behind them.

As the ring, however, was at seven or eight miles distance from any habitable part of the country, and the days short,—for the sun at this time did not rise until nine in the morning, and set again at three,—we determined on taking some little baggage and provision with us, and of quartering at a Sätterwall in its vicinity.

CHAPTER III.

Journey to the Sätterwall.—Beating the Ring.—Indications by which it may be known that Bears are in the Vicinity.—Dens of those animals.—Gun Cases.—Finding and killing the Bears.—Storm at night.—Return to Tönnet.—Skinning, &c. the Bears :—fat ; flesh ; galls.—Manner of extending the Skin.—The Man who rings a Bear entitled to the animal.—Rewards.—Return to Lapp Cottage.

ON the succeeding morning, Thursday, the 6th of December, when there were twenty-two degrees of cold, we set off for the scene of action. On this occasion we took a horse and sledge along with us, for the better conveyance of our baggage, &c.

Our party, including myself, consisted of five persons ; namely, Jan Finne, Svensson, and two peasants who had ringed the bears. Only Jan Finne and myself, however, were armed with guns, the rest of the people being simply provided with axes.

We had no regular road ; but from the lakes, morasses, &c. which lay in our course being now firmly frozen over, the track we pursued was

far from being a bad one: but owing to the snow having so recently fallen, and to its having drifted much in places, our progress was not very rapid; so that it was between ten and eleven o'clock before we reached the Sätterwall, where we proposed taking up our abode. This was situated on the face of a hill, overhanging the western side of a fine and picturesque lake called the *Moss*. Here there were two small tenements, one of which I appropriated to the accommodation of the people, whilst in the other I caused my own baggage to be deposited.

We now put our quarters a little in order; when, after taking some slight refreshment, and after dispatching the two peasants to procure wood and water for the ensuing night's consumption, Jan Finne, Svensson, and myself, started for the ring. This, which could not have been less than some three miles in circumference, was fortunately near at hand; indeed, the southern extremity of it extended up to the few inclosures which surrounded the Sätterwall.

Jan Finne and myself, as I have said, were armed with guns; but we had no other weapons, offensive or defensive. Indeed, though at one time I was in the habit of carrying either a dagger, a light hunting-spear, or pistols, when on these expeditions, from finding such materially to retard my movements, I subsequently went without any of these accompaniments.

We left the dogs at the Sätterwall. Our plan of proceeding, in the first instance, was to beat the most likely brakes within the ring (of which, from having spent much time in that part of the country on a former occasion, I had a very good knowledge,) in the most perfect silence; this gave us the better chance of coming in upon the bears, before they had either time or inclination to leave their quarter.

For this purpose, we formed a line, in the centre of which I placed myself, Jan Finne and Svensson being at some ten paces distance, on either hand of me. Thus we slowly and cautiously proceeded forward, threading on our way the most tangled brakes. Some of these were so thick, that we could with difficulty force our way through them. In fact, they in a degree resembled fir plantations of ten or twelve years' growth, which had never been thinned, or in which the pruning-knife had never been introduced.

All this while we kept peering under every stump, fragment of rock, &c. that came in our way, to see if the game of which we were in search might be lurking beneath; for, in such situations, the bear not unfrequently reposes during the winter season. The trunks of the pines, likewise, we narrowly examined; for, in the vicinity of his den, or even at a very considerable distance from where he thinks to take up his quarters for the winter, the bear usually scores

the trees, either with his claws or fangs. If such marks are fresh, (though why made I know not,) it is an almost certain indication that the animal is not far distant.

The smaller pines, also, we carefully noticed; as from these the bear commonly breaks off many small branches for the purpose of carpeting his lair. In the immediate vicinity of his den, I have seen trees much thicker than my arm, which those animals have severed into two with their fangs. Any little apparent rising ground, or hillock, likewise, that we saw, we did not fail to examine; for it often happens that the bear scrapes together a large quantity of moss, and forms a lair for himself above ground. This, which in Sweden is called his Korg, is not very dissimilar in appearance to a bird's nest; and, though generally of a very considerable size, it may almost be passed by unnoticed, when covered with snow.

We also reconnoitred the ant-hills which came in our way. These are often of an enormous size in the Scandinavian forests; for buried, or partially so, in them, the bear not unfrequently passes the winter months.

Mr. Nilsson says, "the bear sometimes forms his nest in a large tree, in the fork between thrée or more branches, into which the trunk divides itself; these lairs, however, are never more than six feet from the ground." This I never knew to happen;

indeed, I am not aware that I ever saw a tree in the northern parts of Scandinavia, that would at all answer the required purpose.

The forest was at this time full of snow, so that in the closer cover we were almost smothered, as it came down upon us from the trees at every step we took ; but the interest excited by the possible chance of stumbling upon the bear made this evil to be little thought of.

To protect his rifle from the snow, therefore, Jan Finne carried it, as is customary among the Scandinavian chasseurs in the winter-time, in a leathern case, which he either slung across his shoulder, or bore under his arm. Though I was provided with a similar covering for my own gun, I preferred having it loose in my hand, that it might be in the greater readiness in the event of our coming suddenly upon the bears. But for the better security of my lock and the adjacent parts, I had taken the precaution to cover them with a piece of leather of some eighteen inches in length by twelve in breadth.

This was rather a good contrivance ; for, instead of having to carry my gun under the skirts of my coat, where it was still very liable to get wet, or to fumble for a minute or two to get it out of a case, I had nothing to do but to cast this leather to the one side, and in less than a second I was fit for action.

When snow comes in contact with the lock of

one's gun, it quickly melts if there be only a few degrees of cold. If, however, the frost is very severe, it may be brushed off like so much powder. It is most difficult to guard against the effects of new-fallen snow, in consequence of its adhesive nature.

All our exertions to find the bears were of no avail; indeed, though we spent several hours in the search, we could not observe any indications that led us to suppose that those animals might be in the vicinity.

Towards nightfall, therefore, we retraced our steps to the Sätterwall, and dispirited enough we were; for, though we had not beaten the half of the ring, we had searched the most likely brakes; but as there was much fresh ground to try, and as we were besides without dogs, on this occasion, from which cause it was not improbable we might have gone over the bears, we consoled ourselves with the hopes of meeting with better success on the succeeding day.

On returning to our quarters, we found our two peasants had procured an ample quantity of firewood, water, &c. the little apartment, also, that was to be my resting-place for the night, was well cleaned and garnished.

Cooking was now the order of the day; and as we had brought an abundant supply of provisions along with us from Tönnet, we soon set down to a comfortable repast. This was much improved

by a supply of fresh fish, which some peasants from a distant hamlet had just taken in their nets, in a manner I shall by and by describe, in the lake below us.

The little tenement in which I had taken up my quarters was of a very sorry description, the wind having access to its interior at all points: still, as there was a large open fire-place, which I kept well supplied with logs, the cold was little felt. In this instance I was provided with a small tent-bed; and as I had my boat-cloak well lined, as I have said, with sheep-skins, to throw over me, I passed the night far from uncomfortably.

On the following morning, Friday, the 7th of December, when the quicksilver, as on the preceding day, was twenty-two degrees below the freezing-point, we were all up at an early hour, and as soon as we had sufficient daylight, again started for the ring.

On this occasion, we took both our peasants and dogs along with us; for as it now seemed rather problematical whether the bears were within the ring, we thought it best to search it out as soon as possible, for this reason, that, in the event of those animals having moved themselves off, we might be enabled to beat the forest in the immediate vicinity, where it was not improbable they might still have taken up their quarters.

On this, as on the preceding day, we formed a

line, Jan Finne being at one extremity, and myself at the other, whilst Svensson and the peasants filled up the immediate space: we then slipped the dogs from their couplings, and allowed them to range at large.

On the previous afternoon, we had beaten the ring from north to south; but thinking it possible that we might have gone over the bears, we now traversed it in regular and close order from east to west, and thus at every point intersected all our old tracks.

Up to one o'clock, however, we met with nothing, and we then began rather to despair; but thinking at that time a little rest and refreshment would do us no harm, we halted and lighted a roaring fire. This was readily effected, for our party was provided with more than one axe, and each of us had a flint, steel, and a species of fungus which fully answered the purpose of tinder. When wandering in the forest, I was very seldom without these essential articles.

The fire was a great comfort to us, as it not only guarded us against the effects of cold, but it enabled us to dry our clothes; for, owing to our exertions, and to the snow melting upon our persons, these were partially wet through. Very little snow penetrated down my neck on this occasion, the lappet attached to my cap, of which I have spoken, throwing off the greater part of it. My people stood little in need of a similar pro-

tection, for their long hair falling over the collars of their coats, answered the purpose nearly as well.

We now regaled ourselves on the frugal contents of our knapsack; but in this was a flask of brandy, a most valuable thing in the eyes of a Scandinavian peasant. When our homely repast was finished, the people, as usual, indulged themselves with their pipes, an accompaniment a Swedish peasant in the interior is seldom without.

After resting for about half an hour, we again resumed the search for the bears, which we continued until near three o'clock, and until it was beginning to get dusk. At this time I was to the right of the line, which was proceeding in a westerly direction; when, in the distance to the northward, and in a part of the forest we had not yet beaten, I heard my old dog Paijas giving tongue; this he did in such a manner, that I had more than a suspicion he had found what we had so long been in search of.

I now lost not a moment, but, leaving the people, ran as fast as the broken nature of the ground would permit, towards the spot where the dog was challenging, which might be at one hundred and fifty or two hundred paces distance. This was in a rather thick part of the forest, and in a clump of pines, around the foot of which, though at some paces distant,—for he probably remembered the

rough treatment he had received upon a former occasion,—Paijas still kept furiously baying.

Though the dog had found the bears, I did not at the first moment observe the entrance to their den, which was an excavation in the face of a little rising situated between and partly formed by the roots of the surrounding trees. But on discovering it, I at once sprang on to the top of the hillock; and though at that time immediately over the den, the bears still remained quiet.

On my hallooing, they felt so little inclination to leave their quarters, that the old bear simply contented herself with partially projecting her snout. At this, from its being the only point exposed to my view, I levelled my rifle, which was then pointed in a perpendicular direction. On reflection, however, I refrained from firing, as I considered that, though I might have smashed the fore part of her head to pieces, there was little chance of my killing her outright.

Instead therefore of firing whilst in that situation, I stepped, (and it certainly was not “the most prudent step” a man ever took,) with my left foot in advance, directly over her, to the opposite side of the hole, when wheeling about on the instant, and having then a full view of her head, from which the muzzle of my gun was hardly two feet distant, and my left foot still less, for it was partially in the entrance to the den itself, I sent a bullet through her skull.

I now called loudly to the people, none of whom, nor even the other dogs, which had been questing to some birds in another part of the forest, had as yet come up,—for I was rather apprehensive the cubs might attempt to make their escape. To prevent this, I stood for a while over the den in readiness to give them a warm reception with the butt-end of my rifle.

But three or four minutes elapsed before Jan Finne, who was to the left of our line, Svensson, and the peasants, made their appearance; for, strange to say, though Paijas had been in Jan Finne's possession for several years, he either did not recognise his challenge, or he had not a suspicion it was to the bears; and in consequence, neither he nor the people moved from where I had left them, until they heard my shot.

My apprehensions as to the cubs attempting to escape were, however, groundless, for they still continued quiet; at first, indeed, we could see nothing of them, for the old bear, who, as is usual with those animals when they have young, was lying in the front of the den, and we, therefore, almost began to think we had hit upon a bear distinct from those of which we were in search. But on the people introducing a stake, and moving the old bear a little to the side, one of the cubs, and subsequently a second, and a third, exhibited themselves, all of which I despatched, either with my own or with Jan Finne's rifle.

The work of death being at length completed, we drew the bears out of their den. This however was of such small dimensions, that it was the admiration of us all how they could have stowed themselves away in it. Bears usually prepare their winter-quarters during the autumnal months, and some time previously to taking possession of them ; but the animals, of which I am now speaking, having been disturbed from their original lair at a time when the ground was hard frozen, and when it was, of course, much more difficult to embed themselves in the earth, probably accounted for the small size of the excavation in which we found them.

The old bear had attained her full growth ; the cubs were nearly a year old, and of about the size of large dogs. The whole of them were in tolerably good condition.

This was a rather successful *chasse* ; as, had the bears been quartered in an open lair, instead of the situation in which we found them, from the dog being so far distant from us when he first challenged, it is most likely they would have moved themselves off long before we could have come up. Indeed, as it was, had I not been rather quick upon them, it is very probable they would have given us the slip for that time. She-bears with cubs, however, usually lie much closer than others.

After indulging the people with a glass of

brandy, I lost no time in despatching one of the peasants to Tönnet, that he might have two sledges in readiness at an early hour on the following morning ; one to convey the bears to that place, and the other my little baggage ; for, having accomplished our object, I purposed forthwith retracing my steps to Lapp cottage.

The shades of evening had by this time long set in ; so, after covering our spoil with a few pine branches to keep off the weather, we once more made for the Sätterwall.

During the night, the wind having veered to the southward, the frost disappeared, and a very heavy storm of wind, rain, and sleet came on, which continued with unabated violence for very many hours afterwards. This made us congratulate ourselves not a little on the fortunate termination of our expedition ; and we had still more reason to do so a few days subsequently, when the ground in most places became altogether bare of snow. In fact, had we not killed the bears on this occasion, it is not improbable that they would have escaped altogether.

Long before daylight on the following morning, Saturday, the 8th of December, and during almost a hurricane of wind, attended with sleet and rain, our peasant, with two sledges, (one of which was driven by my superstitious guide, Per) arrived from Tönnet.

It took us, however, some time to get the bears

out of the forest, as, to effect this, we had in places to clear away the underwood, to open a passage for the sledges. Some manœuvring also was required to prevail upon the horses to approach the bears ; for though the beasts were dead, the poor animals seemed to have an instinctive dread of them. To accomplish this object, we took the horses from the sledges ; when, after laying the bears upon the latter, and covering them with pine branches, so that nothing was visible, we backed those useful animals upon, and attached them to the vehicles.

Some delay took place whilst this was going forward, and in consequence, the day was well advanced before we took leave of the Sätterwall and faced towards Tönnet. Our journey was a comfortless one, as it was raining or sleeting the whole way.

On our reaching that hamlet at about one o'clock in the afternoon, we were surrounded with groups of people, whom curiosity to see the bears had drawn to the spot. They joyfully greeted us on the success of our little expedition, as those animals committed much slaughter among the horses and cattle in all that part of the country.

The bears now underwent the process of skinning and cutting up ; and as the weather was unfavourable, the operation took place within-doors. The animals were laid on their backs on a table, and, when divested of their skins, they much

resembled, in many respects, their breasts and arms in particular, so many human beings. The sight, in consequence, was a rather shocking one, and forcibly reminded me of a disgusting exhibition I had witnessed a few years before, at a celebrated anatomist's in London. The horrors of this, indeed—the macerating tub with its attendant vulture—will never, I think, be effaced from my imagination.

The fore-legs of the old bear were uncommonly muscular; and, indeed, after seeing them, a person might readily have believed in the amazing prowess ascribed to bears. The state of the intestines of the animals was as I have described in the beginning of this work.

The galls we carefully preserved; those being considered in Scandinavia a specific against a variety of disorders; the like was the case with the fat, which is as highly esteemed in Sweden as with us. This, some one says, is possessed of such extraordinary virtue, that if a deal-box be rubbed with it overnight, on the following morning it will be converted into a hair-trunk.

Only the fat, (Ister) by the by, which is found about the intestines, is used in Scandinavia medically, or for the hair; of this there is usually but an inconsiderable quantity. The fat (fet) itself, which, on a large bear, may weigh sixty or eighty pounds, is merely used for culinary purposes. The bears' grease we purchase in this country, if bears'

grease it really be, is, I have reason to believe, concocted out of the whole of the fat found upon those animals.

The hams (those at least that I took possession of) were destined to be smoked. In that state, they are considered great delicacies. The remainder of the carcass was either salted, or reserved in its then state.

When fresh, I consider the flesh of the bear, which sometimes resembles beef, to be excellent. Indeed, during this particular winter, it constituted a principal part of my food: the paws are thought to be a great dainty.

The skins of our bears were now nailed to the sides of a warm room; the fat was then scraped from them, and afterwards a little salt and water, as also wood-ashes, were applied, that they might dry the sooner. The skin of the old bear was about eight feet in length, and of a proportionate breadth.

In taking the skin from a bear, the knife is not passed along the stomach farther than to within some few inches of the insertion of the tail; this gives the skin, when dried and extended, a handsome and more compact appearance. The manner in which this is effected is represented in a wood-cut, which will be found farther on. The claws are allowed to remain on the skin, which add much to its beauty.

In the interior of the country, the weight of a

bear, either from want of curiosity or opportunity, is rarely ascertained: the peasants, however, when speaking of the size of the animal, say their skins were of such a *length*. In this case, therefore, if a person wishes to form an idea of the actual dimensions of the bear, he must allow for the few inches of which I have just spoken. But this method of judging of the size of those animals, unless one actually sees the skin itself, is far from being satisfactory; for it not unfrequently happens, that, instead of being extended in the natural form, they are drawn out to a most preposterous length, when their width, in consequence, becomes excessively disproportionate.

The skin of the bear is in by far the best order in the winter-time; if the animal be of moderate size, and killed at that season, it is worth, in Sweden, from two to three pounds.

As I had not made any previous stipulation to the contrary, the bears we had just slaughtered were the property of our two peasants. This was in consequence of their having ringed these animals in the first instance.

I believe no actual law exists in Sweden to that effect, though it is a perfectly well-understood thing in the interior of the country, that the man who rings a bear is entitled to the animal; and in consequence, without express permission, no other person dreams of disturbing the beast. But in Norway, I have reason to think there is an

ordinance making the bear the property of the man who rings him in the first instance; and, in consequence, those who either disturb or destroy the animal without authority are subjected to rather severe penalties.

As my two peasants were very poor, I did not care to deprive them of too much of their booty; my own share of the spoil was, in consequence, trifling. Indeed, I only took possession of the fat, tongues, and a little of the flesh of the bears. They proved a rich prize to the people; for, independently of the flesh, which was much esteemed in that part of the world, the skins alone were worth about five pounds, which is a considerable sum in Sweden. In addition to this, they were entitled to a reward (*Sköttpenningar*) paid by the Government, or rather the particular district, for the destruction of pernicious animals.

Leaving Jan Finne and Svensson with the dogs at Tönnet, I set off in my sledge towards evening for Lapp cottage; but owing to the thaw, the track was not in the best order, and as I was also delayed for a horse on the way, it was rather late before I reached my quarters.

CHAPTER IV.

State of the weather.—Want of Snow.—Christmas customs.—Christmas Eve.—Räda Church.—Personalia.—Collections for the Poor.—Bells.—Marriage Ceremony.—Laws relating to Marriages.—Peasants' Marriages.

THE following day, Sunday the 9th of December, the weather took up again and became slightly frosty.

On the afternoon of Monday the 10th, Jan Finne made his appearance at Lapp cottage, having left, according to my directions, Svensson, together with the dogs and baggage, at Sälje, where we now purposed proceeding forthwith, to search for the bear which was reported to be ringed in that vicinity.

During the night, however, the frost again disappeared ; and when, at five o'clock on the following morning, which of course was several hours before daylight, the horse was to the sledge, and we were on the point of starting for Sälje, it came on to rain so heavily, that we thought it very

unadvisable to prosecute our intended plan. Even at this time there was but little snow in the forest, and from the then state of the weather there seemed every chance of such disappearing altogether. This was a great disappointment, but we consoled ourselves with hoping that there would soon be a change for the better.

These hopes were far from being realized. Strange to say, and contrary to what is usually the case in the North of Europe at that period of the year, for a long time afterwards we had little other than southerly winds and mild rainy weather. The temperature, indeed, much resembled what I have not unfrequently met with on the west coast of Ireland at the like season.

This being the case, and seeing no immediate alteration likely to take place, after waiting some few days, I permitted Jan Finne and Svensson to return to their homes, where they were anxious to remain during the Christmas festivities, which were then so nearly approaching. It was well I did so, for the snow now quickly vanished, and in a short time not a particle of it was to be seen in the vicinity of my quarters. In fact, instead of the ground being covered with snow to the depth of a foot or two, and of our experiencing some forty or fifty degrees of cold, which was not uncommonly the case at that period, the people, in some instances, were now actually engaged in

ploughing, a circumstance that had hardly been known in the memory of man up to the end of the year.

The want of snow at this time was greatly felt, as it was difficult to communicate with the interior parts of the country: the timber, besides, which had been felled during the autumn, could not be conveyed from the forest; nor were the peasants and others enabled to obtain the necessary supplies of forage, &c. from their Sätterwalls: the smelting-houses and forges could not be furnished with the needful quantity of coke: in short, the ordinary occupations of the people at this period of the year were, from this cause, completely at a stand-still.

Great preparations were now made by all classes to celebrate the solemn festival of Christmas. The floors of the rooms, belonging as well to rich as poor, after undergoing a thorough purification, were littered with straw, in commemoration of the birth of our Saviour in a stable.

One might also frequently see a number of young pine-trees, of thirty or forty feet in height, which, after having been stripped of their bark and leaves, with the exception of a bunch at the top, were placed in an upright position, at stated intervals, around the dwellings of the peasantry. This custom, for which I could never obtain a satisfactory explanation, is universal in many parts of Dalecarlia.

Every good thing that could pamper the appetite, as far as their means went, was likewise put in requisition, as with us in England, at this season. Though they thought of themselves, however, many of the peasants did not forget the inferior order of the creation. Indeed, it was an almost universal custom among them, to expose a sheaf of unthrashed corn on a pole in the vicinity of their dwellings, for the poor sparrows and other birds, which at this inclement period of the year must be in a state of starvation. They alleged as their reason for performing this act of beneficence, that all creatures should be made to rejoice on the anniversary of Christ's coming among us mortals.

I wish I had not to record another circumstance that is not quite so creditable to the peasantry:—but, to tell the truth, during the few days the festivities last, they usually make such frequent application to the brandy-bottle, that they are far too commonly in a state of intoxication.

I had the pleasure of spending Christmas eve at Uddeholm.

Near the conclusion of the supper, two figures, (Jul. Gubbar) masked and attired in the most grotesque habiliments, entered the room. One of them carried a bell in its hand, the other an immense basket; this latter contained a vast variety of presents destined for the different branches of

the family and guests. To many of these presents some amusing little scrap of prose or poetry was appended, the reading of which occasionally created no little merriment among the assembled party. The names of the donors were not attached to the presents, though in most instances it is probable shrewd guesses were entertained.

It was highly gratifying to witness this little reciprocation of kindnesses. Indeed Mrs. Geijer's children, and she had several, always looked forward to this day as one big with events, and as by far the happiest of their lives.

The merry and hearty sociality of the time, as observed in Sweden, will remind the reader of our *old* English Christmas celebrations, when feasting alone was not considered sufficient without an interchange of the kindness of the heart. These genial customs are now injured by over-refinement, and are degraded into the sordid Christmas-box given to menials.

Ben Jonson, in one of his Masques, gives so good an idea of the merry-making of our forefathers in the olden time, and of the Swedes in the present, that I cannot resist the temptation to transcribe a few of his words. He brings in a quaintly-dressed figure, intended as a personification of Christmas, who, after announcing himself, goes on to say, "Why, I'm no dangerous

person, and so I told my friends o' the guard. The truth is, I ha' brought a masque here, out of the citie, o' my own making, and do present it by a set of my sons, good dancing boys all." The mummers are then introduced in the following names and costumes, viz.

" *Misrule*,—in a velvet cap, with a sprig, a short cloak, and great yellow ruff, like a reveler, &c.

" *Carol*,—in a long tawny coat, with a red cap, and a flute at his girdle, &c.

" *Minced-pie*,—like a fine cook's wife, dressed neat, &c.

" *Gambol*,—like a tumbler with a hoop and bells, &c.

" *New Year's Gift*,—in a blue coat, (serving-man like,) with an orange and a sprig of rosemary gilt on his head; his hat full of brooches, with a collar of gingerbread, and a bottle of wine on either arm.

" *Mumming*,—in a masquing pied suit, with a visor, &c.

" *Wassail*,—like a neat sempster and songster; her page bearing a brown bowl, &c.

" *Offering*,—in a short gown, with a porter's staff in his hand; a wyth borne before him, and a bason by his torch-bearer."

These grotesque figures join in a dance, while one sings some verses commencing with the following :

“ Now their intent is to represent,
With all the appurtenances,
A right Christmās, as of old it was,
To be gathered out of the dances
Which they do bring,” &c. &c. &c.

But to leave this digression, into which I have been tempted by a regard for old merry Christmas, and by an admiration of the hearty though homely manner in which it is celebrated in Sweden: The usual hour for the commencement of Divine service at the church at Rāda was between ten and eleven o'clock. On Christmas-day, however, it began soon after six in the morning. As this was near three hours before the sun was above the horizon, candles were made use of; but in spite of the hour being thus early, the church was crowded to excess; for, on this, as well as on other holy days, which are of rather frequent occurrence in Sweden, the peasants are exceedingly regular in their attendance.

The established religion in Sweden is, as I have said, the Lutheran, the forms of which are too well known to need any observations of mine. But one custom I noticed in the interior of Wermeland, which it may perhaps be worth recording.

Near to the conclusion of the service, and after some observations apposite to the occasion, the clergyman read from a paper entitled *Personalia*, the names of those persons who had recently died within his parish. This contained also many par-

ticulars relating to the birth, parentage, &c. of each of the deceased individuals. He then expatiated on their good or bad deeds upon earth, and concluded with some remarks on the uncertainty of life, or other reflections of a similarly impressive nature.

I subjoin the substance of a *Personalia*, which I happen to have in my possession, and which to some may not be uninteresting. It relates to a young man who, owing to an accident, had met with a watery grave.

“ ‘ There is but a step between me and death,’* said a man whose life was at that time in imminent danger ; and every-day experience shows the truth of this saying. If we always thought and saw how near death was to us—how near he follows our steps—how soon he comes up with us—then we should tread the uncertain path of life with more caution, and count the passing moments, and contemplate with awe his inevitable approach. Of what immense importance is this step ! We must all take it, and how soon it is taken ! In one moment we are snatched from the theatre of life, on which we appeared as passing shadows ! What a difference between the light of day and the darkness of night—the warmth of life and the chill of death—the animating feeling of existence, and the mouldering grave !

* 1 Samuel, xx. 3.

“ We have now before us a melancholy instance of the uncertainty of human life. A young man, in the bloom of youth, in the full enjoyment of health and vigour, is in a few moments bereft of existence—lifeless. What an example does that corpse exhibit to us! What does it say to us, though dumb? What I have just said, ‘ There is only one step between me and death.’

“ He that has now taken this last earthly step, and whose remains we have this day consigned to the grave, was Olof Carlsson, from Bu-torp, eldest son of Carl Dicksson, and his wife Christina. He was born the 22nd of October 1810, and was drowned in the river Uf, the thirtieth of last month, being then in the eighteenth year of his age. This unlooked-for event is to be deeply lamented for many reasons.

“ All participate in your sorrows, disconsolate parents! You are advanced in years. Heavy will be the afflictions of your old age, now that they can no longer be lightened by the hand of your child. You had without doubt fondly anticipated that he would have been the prop of your declining years, when you were tottering on the brink of the grave, and have rendered you the last sad offices by closing your eyes.

“ For many reasons, the departed has made himself worthy of our regrets. One of the sublimest, and, alas! unusual epitaphs of our days

which we can inscribe to his memory, as an example for the present and future generation, is, that he was never known to take the Lord's name in vain. For this he deserves our unqualified praise, that sin being unhappily so prevalent. According to the concurrent testimony of every one, the life of the deceased in other respects was irreproachable. He was always to be seen near his aged parents. The evening of the day may be different from the morning. Every one knows in what short space of time this unhappy occurrence took place. Thus hastily was the prop of your old age, and the good example for youth, hurried into another life.—But you sigh heavily! Do you think he is gone for ever? I will pour balsam into your bleeding heart; the departed live, and we become immortal through death. He is only gone a little while before you. When you have finished your course on earth, you will find him in the blessed abodes of eternity. And time flies so fast, that perhaps in a few moments some of us will be reckoned among the dead.

“ Uncertain 'tis, when, how, and where,
We reach our earthly goal;
Therefore each hour for death prepare,
Be ready, O my soul!”

Another Personalia that I have by me, paying a just tribute to the memory of an amiable and virtuous young woman, is to the following effect.

“ ‘ Let no flower of the spring pass by us. Let us crown ourselves with rose-buds, before they be withered.’—*Wisdom of Solomon*, ii. 7 and 8.

“ With this exclamation, happy youth, you hasten out to the enamelled meads, and find the air pure! the sky clear! and the earth enchanting! Every thing smiles—every thing breathes life—every thing sings praise—every thing exhales perfume, and inspires serenity and pleasure.

“ Yes! enjoy in innocence that happiness which is so short—that good, which is so evanescent. Do you, in the fear of God, rejoice in the buoyancy of health and spirits? Do so gratefully, before age approaches, and evil days advance, and autumn and winter arrive. Alas! they soon appear. But are you certain that you will witness either season? Are you even certain that you will reach the summer? What is your life? A breath—a grain of dust, which is carried hence by the gentlest breeze.

“ ‘ As for man, his days are as grass : as a flower of the field so he flourisheth.

“ ‘ For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.’

“ But death does not neglect even the ‘ flower of the spring;’ yea, he takes pride in ‘ crowning himself with rose-buds before they be withered.’

“ We have seen this often. We see it here.

He has wreathed in his pale garland this rose, which, early broken from its stem, cannot now receive nourishment from the earth, nor colour and freshness from these faint and powerless sunbeams.

“Ought we not to repine at this? To many it may appear as if contrary to the order of nature to be carried off so early; as if the object of life were hereby defeated—as if the aim of our being were incomprehensible or unjust.

“But to those who contemplate it from a higher point of view; to those who know that man has to attain a brighter—a happier state of existence, to which this limited one is merely initiatory—this dispensation will appear in full accordance with a holy and gracious Providence.

“To me it has always seemed to be an act of peculiar grace in God, to remit the more tedious—the more difficult—the more perilous trials; to save his creatures from evil and from seductions—to withdraw them, as Scripture says, from a life amongst sinners, before vice confounds the understanding, or false doctrine deceives the soul.

“And in particular it may be asked:—What has the young female to expect, who with care cultivates her heart and understanding—with success brings to perfection the delicate virtues and amiable qualities of her sex; what, I repeat, has such a one to expect in a world where the most

virtuous, to be noticed, must often be supported by the most vicious?

“Had the departed only expected happiness from such a source, she would have been undeserving of any thing better, and might equally be pitied, whether she had attained or failed in her object.

“But excellence requires not the aid of unworthiness. It is a tender plant, but it can nevertheless support itself; and though bashful of display, will obtain respect from its own intrinsic merit. Ridiculed both by the butterfly and the grub, it equally despises the trifles around which the one flutters, and which the other contaminates. Alone, she prefers standing in a circle of kindred scions, supporting with them their earthly protector, until the angel of peace comes, and transfers her to a better world.

“So happily—so speedily—became this the lot of her, the good daughter, the tender sister—whose withered remains we have now before us—but even of which we must also soon be bereft. She herself has gone before us to that place where virtue has its residence amongst the holy—and innocence its crown amongst the happy. High above was registered the object of her silent wish, which is now fulfilled. It never interfered with her round of duties, nor with harmless mirth; but it saved her from the vanity of the times, and from the giddiness of a transitory

world; it gave her a true and deep feeling—a tender and gentle seriousness—a disposition mild and pure, and devoted to her God. Unassuming and indefatigable, she discharged her earthly trust—tending her father's house, comforting her father's heart, and guiding those who, motherless like herself, but of more tender years, required and acknowledged her more mature discretion—her more steady counsel. Her charge she has accomplished, and she has already reaped the reward.

“Let her enjoy it, thou sorrowful, aged father! and reflect that neither thou nor the world could so reward her. Reflect on this, and in the happy conviction of a soul so exalted, and in still happier anticipations, let joy again take possession of thy bosom, and brighten the evening of thy life. Thou hast sent up to thy beloved wife a sure and welcome pledge that thou wilt also follow after, when thy calling on earth has been fulfilled.

“Mayest thou, in the mean time, long survive, cherished by those thou still pressest to thy paternal bosom! May they, with thee, and us, by repeated and tender contemplations on the dust which rests here, and the spirit which animated it, learn to understand both the brevity and importance of life—man's instability here, and imperishability hereafter.

“ Whene’er we cover with the sod,
That which is dearest to the heart,
Bid us remember, gracious God,
That we must all from hence depart.
Teach us to conquer trials here,
And so to run time’s arduous race,
That we, with all we held most dear,
May meet before thy glorious face.”

Collections were made during the service for the poor. This was effected by the churchwarden or others handing round to the several pews a rather handsome bag or purse, appended to a long wand, into which each individual dropped his mite. To this purse a little bell was affixed, the tinkling of which I used to think a little interfered with the solemnity of the occasion. In the front of the church, also, a box was attached, the lid of which was strongly secured by locks and bars, into which the charitable might make their donations.

If the peasantry be standing near to the church when the bells ring, they all take off their hats. This custom, which is common in Catholic countries, I little expected to see among people professing the reformed religion.

The church at Răda, like the generality of the Swedish places of worship, was often very cold : this was not surprising, as the wind had access to the interior in every direction, and there was no fire-place in the building. I think I have been present at Divine service, when the temperature

in the body of the church must have been near twenty degrees below zero. The cold, however, is the less felt, as the congregation is generally clothed in furs, &c.

During the winter season it would, of course, be impossible to open graves for the interment of the dead; the bodies are therefore placed in a small building, appropriated to the purpose, erected in the churchyard. Here they remain until the frost breaks up in the spring, when the corpses are consigned to their mother earth.

In the churchyard at Råda is a long and large mound, under which, some four years ago, eleven unfortunate persons were interred in one common grave.

These individuals were ordered by the authorities of the district to assist at a skall, when, on pushing off in a boat from the southern extremity of the Råda lake, it being the summer season, their bark, from some mismanagement, filled in the instant, and went down in deep water. There were thirteen men in the boat at the time, only two of whom were saved. The accident was supposed to have been owing to the whole or a portion of the people being in a state of intoxication.

In this churchyard are also interred several individuals who met with a melancholy end, a short time previously to my first visiting Wermeland.

Three young girls had been enjoying themselves at a dance at Risberg, which is on the op-

posite side of the Råda lake to Risäter ; but during the night they set off for the latter place, which was their home. It was in the winter-time, or rather in the spring ; and as the frost was breaking up, the ice on the lake was in a rather insecure state. They were in a sledge : this was not drawn in the usual manner by a horse, but it was impelled forward by a young man on common skates, as one sometimes sees practised in that part of the world. Thus they had proceeded for a considerable distance, when in a moment the whole party were precipitated into a *windwak*, or hole in the ice, which, from the darkness of the night, they had not previously noticed. The shrieks of the poor creatures were dreadful ; and though the place where the accident happened was about three miles from Uddeholm, they were distinctly heard at that place. Assistance, however, was not at hand, and all the party miserably perished.

Many marriages take place among the peasantry at this festive season ; more indeed, probably, in the ten days succeeding Christmas, than during all the rest of the year.

As the manner in which the connubial knot is tied in Wermeland was something novel, it may not be out of place for me to describe the marriage ceremony, at which I was once present, in the church of Råda.

It was a little before the conclusion of Divine

service that I observed the eyes of many of the congregation directed towards the door of the church ; and at the same time the sound of distant music caught my ear. This proceeded from four fiddlers, who, at the head of three couple that were to be united for better or worse, now entered the church : to give farther *éclat* to the affair, a gentleman of my acquaintance, in the full uniform of his office, escorted two of the blushing brides. The procession now moved up the middle aisle of the church ; the musicians playing some light air or other until it reached the altar, when their services for a while were dispensed with.

The brides, who were peasant girls, were attired in the gayest apparel imaginable ; among other finery, they were decorated with splendid chaplets, or crowns, to which were attached a variety of ornaments. These chaplets, however, were not procured especially for the occasion, they having probably answered the like purpose to several preceding generations. The men were well dressed in their usual costume, and made a most respectable appearance.

The parties now knelt at the foot of the altar, when the clergyman commenced reading the service usual on these occasions. During its continuance, the brides' maids and men came forward, and held silken shawls, to represent canopies, over the heads of the respective couples. The *spectacle*

altogether was very imposing ; indeed, it seemed to excite no little interest among the large congregation assembled on the occasion.

When the ceremony was completed, and the worthy clergyman had given his last benediction, the fiddlers again struck up their notes, when, heading the happy swains, with their better-halves leaning on their arms, the procession moved out of the church in the same manner in which it had entered.

A man never looks very amiable when playing on a fiddle ; and, consequently, the introduction of several of these scrapers upon cat-gut into the church, did not at all increase the solemnity of the scene.

Some peculiar laws exist in Sweden regarding the peasants and others forming marriage contracts ; but I am not quite sure if such be very rigorously adhered to. I annex a copy of these ordinances.

“ FINALLY, also, a certain age is required to make a betrothing valid by law ; that is to say, twenty-one years for the male, and fifteen years for the female.—(Cap. I. Sect. 6 of the Statute of Marriage. Royal Church Regulations, Cap. XV. Sect. 5.) There is, however, this exception, that the sons of the peasantry may contract marriage on reaching the age of eighteen, when such a youth is provided with a share of a farm or cottage which he may himself inhabit or cultivate,

or has got a certain yearly employment, or else pursues some handicraft or trade ; but, on the contrary, no loose persons, not having or being able to procure any fixed habitation or the means of support, are allowed to marry, or who by a life of vagrancy or other unlawful means procure their subsistence.”—(Royal Ordinances, 14th March 1748, and 8th December 1756.)

“ No person shall be allowed to marry until he well understands the principles of the Christian religion, or has received the Holy Communion.”—(Royal Church Regulations, Cap. XV. Sect. 11.)

If, on the occasion of a marriage among the peasantry, the parties be wealthy, open house is kept for several days after the ceremony. Should the contrary be the case, the festivities are usually confined to a single day. On these occasions, every good thing within their means is provided for the entertainment of their guests. The Swedish balm of Gilead, brandy, is not, as it may be supposed, forgotten at these times.

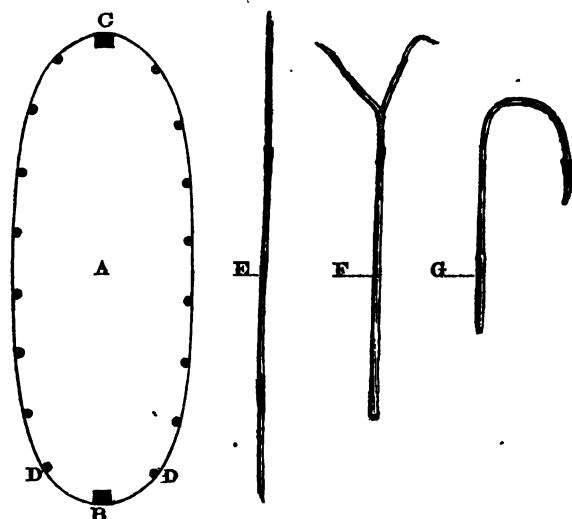
Balls are always given on these occasions ; and as the guests are expected to dance with the bride, and to make her a trifling present, a small fund is collected, which serves as well to defray the expenses of the nuptials as for an outfit towards commencing housekeeping. The Swedish national dance is the Polska, which, in its character, resembles the waltz.

CHAPTER V.

Fishing under the ice.—The Hare.—Hare-shooting.—Hare-lip.

THOUGH the weather had been mild for some time previously, the ice was still of a considerable thickness on most of the lakes and rivers: but, in spite of this obstruction, fish were not unfrequently taken by lines or nets. This, indeed, was the case when the ice was two or three feet in thickness.

At Uddeholm and Risäter, the drag-net was often resorted to for this purpose, by which considerable quantities of fish were sometimes caught. The manner in which this was brought into play was somewhat curious; and as I do not recollect ever having seen it described, I shall endeavour, with the assistance of the annexed woodcut, to give an idea of the way in which the operation was conducted.



Over such parts of the lake as were known to be only of a certain depth, and where the bottom was free from obstruction, spaces of an oval shape were marked upon the ice. These were usually of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred paces in length, by fifty or sixty at their greatest breadth. At either ends of these figures, and exactly opposite to each other, two holes of about six feet square, B and C, were cut in the ice, whilst along their sides, and at about fifty feet apart, other small circular holes, D D, were made of about eighteen inches in diameter.

The hauling-lines of the net were now introduced into the hole B, and from thence they were

conveyed to the nearest of the circular apertures D D. This was effected by means of a pole (or rather of several poles attached together) E, which was impelled forward by a forked-stick F. If the poles, however, happened to go wide of their intended mark, they were recovered by the crooked stick G, which was armed with a cow's or other horn, and which acted like a grappling iron. The hauling-lines being now arrived at D D, the net, a common drag of seventy or eighty paces in length, was then introduced into the hole B. This soon became extended to its proper dimensions, and it was then drawn gradually forward until it reached its destination C, or the hole opposite to that where it had entered. Here a man stood with a pole, beating and disturbing the water to prevent the escape of the fish. From this hole, the net with its contents was drawn on to the ice.

The operation altogether lasted about an hour ; but as there were several other places similarly prepared in different parts of the lake, a fishing excursion generally occupied the greater part of the day. Fine and moderate weather was usually selected for the purpose, or otherwise the people would not have been able to contend against the effects of the water.

The holes I speak of were generally opened in the ice in the early part of the winter ; and they were made use of occasionally during the whole of that inclement season of the year.

The greatest evil attendant upon this kind of fishing arises from the net frequently getting fast to the bottom : in such cases it was generally necessary to form fresh holes in the ice, so as to trace its direction. If the ice was thick, this operation was attended with considerable labour and trouble.

The drag-nets used on these occasions, instead of being leaded as ours usually are, were weighted with pebbles, or pieces of iron, that were introduced into small cows' horns ; the points of these were always placed in advance, the better, I imagine, to get over any obstruction there might be at the bottom. The lines of the net were formed of goat's-hair, which was much more elastic and durable than those made of hemp.

Flue-nets were also occasionally made use of : these, which were introduced under the ice in a similar manner to the drag-net, often proved very destructive.

Immediately after Christmas, Mr. Falk made up a little party (including myself) to shoot hares, of which there was a fair sprinkling throughout the surrounding forest. That gentleman had, as I have said, a good many beagles, and we therefore anticipated some amusement. But before I proceed to detail our proceedings, it may not be out of place to say a few words regarding the animal we were in pursuit of.

There is said to be only one kind of hare in Scandinavia ; Swedish naturalists seem to be a little at a loss under what denomination to rank it. Mr. Nilsson thinks it is not of the same species as the hare common to the Swiss Alps, which is classed by Pallas as the *Lepus variabilis* ; and he decidedly says it is not the common hare, (*Lepidus timidus*,) which is to found on the low lands of Denmark, Germany, France, and other southern European countries. In conjunction with Pallas, therefore, he designates it the *Lepus Borealis*, or Northern hare.

The hare is to be found all over Scandinavia, as well in the more southern provinces of Sweden as in the mountain regions of Lapland and Norway. Like several other animals, however, indigenous to that peninsula, he is said to attain to a larger size in the southern than in the more northern districts. His predominant colour is gray in the summer, the shades varying more or less according to the season of the year, and the latitude in which he is found ; but in the winter, with the exception of his ears being tipped with black, he is white, or very nearly so. This is universally the case from Scania, the most southern of the Swedish provinces, to the North Cape.

The hare is, as it is well known, a most prolific animal, which is a wise provision of Nature, for the poor creature has numberless enemies to contend with. She carries her young for thirty or

thirty-one days, and produces several at a birth. She suckles them for about three weeks, and then leaves them to shift for themselves. She is said to have three families in the course of the summer. The first in March or April, the second about Midsummer, and the third in August. Young hares, as it is well known, may be easily domesticated, and they are capable of acquiring many amusing tricks.

In the summer season, the Scandinavian hare subsists in much the same manner as our own; but in winter, when the ground is deeply covered with snow, and when he has a difficulty in getting access to vegetable substances, he feeds for the most part on the rind of trees. He is particularly fond of that of the Aspen, (Asp.) Sallow, (Sälg,) and Willow, (Pil,) &c.

It is said that during the summer, when the hare is in his seat, his head is always towards the north; but in the winter the reverse is the case, for the animal then faces towards the south. This is supposed to be in consequence of his wish to avoid the scorching rays of the sun at the former, and the cold north winds at the latter period of the year.

To proceed.—We threw off in the first instance near to Ack-sjon, a fine lake, situated at about six or seven miles to the north-east of my quarters. Here we slipped about half the hounds from their couplings, keeping the others in reserve,

that they might not all tire at once. We then formed a line, and beat the country before us.

To assist the dogs, however, in getting poor puss from her seat, we made all kinds of discordant noises. For this purpose a soldier, who was of our party, occasionally kept tat-tat-tooing upon an enormous drum that he carried before him; another repeatedly discharged a large horse-pistol; whilst others again made abundant use of rattles, similar to those of our watchmen: these sounds, together with our shouts, were enough to alarm the whole country.

A hare of course was soon on foot with all this uproar: when, therefore, we heard the music of the hounds, we separated, and stationing ourselves in paths and other places where it was probable she might come, we soon succeeded in waylaying and shooting the poor animal.

The death halloo was then given by the successful sportsman to collect our scattered party.

A singular operation was now performed: the head of the hare, with the exception of the ears, which remained attached to the skin, was severed with a knife from the body. The only reason I could ever hear alleged for this most strange custom, which is universally adopted throughout Sweden, was, that if a woman in a state of pregnancy was to see the head of the animal, her offspring would inevitably have a hare-lip.

On one occasion, indeed, that I brought a hare,

which had not been decapitated, into a house, where there was a young female *enceinte*, the poor creature was so much distressed at the sight, that, to relieve her apprehensions, I was obliged to take an axe and cut off the head of the animal.

Our game being bagged, we again formed a line, as in the first instance, and beat the country before us in an easterly direction towards the Knon Lake. In the course of the day we found several hares, some of which escaped, whilst the chase of others afforded us a good deal of diversion before they were killed.

We had one great advantage over the hares on this occasion ; for the ground being in most places bare of snow, and those animals perfectly white, they were of course perceivable at very long distances.

Towards evening we reached a cottage situated on the western face of a hill, overlooking the Knon, which we made our quarters for the night. We had abundance of provisions, &c. with us, and we now enjoyed a hearty repast. As beds, however, were not procurable, we littered down a quantity of clean straw upon the floor, and thus, with our knapsacks for our pillows, we reposed until morning.

This chasse continued altogether for nearly three days, during which twenty-four hares were bagged. Though a vast extent of country was beaten on this occasion, very little game of any other description was met with.

Hunting on horseback, in the English fashion, is, I believe, rarely or never resorted to in Sweden, the hares being most commonly killed in a similar manner to that of which I have just made mention. But when coursing, an amusement confined almost solely, I believe, to Scania, the sportsmen occasionally make use of horses. I subjoin some remarks of Mr. Greiff's, relating as well to the chasse as to the natural history of the hare in that country.

"The hare-hunt, with the harriers so called, or the common hounds, is one of the pleasantest sports; but if you do not wish to be deprived of it in course of time, you ought not to prosecute it at all seasons of the year. It is true, that the female brings forth young three times in the course of the summer, and has seven to eight young each time;* but the mother's indifference for her young, and the many kind of persecutions they are subject to, are the cause that few grow up. Besides man, who shoots and catches, the hare's enemies are the wolf, fox, dog, cat, eagle, eagle-owl, hare-owl, and hawks of different sorts. In wet and rainy weather, midges and insects fasten themselves about the eyes of the young hare, and inflame them so, that worms are

* "The female never places the young ones in one place, but one here, another there, and perhaps visits them only two or three times, and perhaps never. I have however found three under the same bush; but as it was during a hunt, it is possible that the parturition was hastened by the chase."

bred and entirely consume him. In winters when there is not snow upon the ground his white skin betrays him. From March to August, the hunting of the hare should be followed with moderation. A prudent and old sportsman never shoots the female at that period; and if a few males are shot it does no harm. The female is generally larger, carries herself higher when she runs, makes small bounds, and squats often; the male is little, runs low, and makes wide bounds.

“ It is asserted that old male hares kill the young ones; but I believe the case is the same with this as with other animals,—that when any of them has got a good station, the strongest drives the weakest from it. In the spring it is easiest for the dogs to get them up; and as the males ramble* both night and day, one can often find four or five with one female. About Midsummer is the most difficult time to find them, when the juniper bush is in bloom, and all flowers throw out such a strong scent that it is not easy for the dogs to wind them: the hare also does not require to go far for food. I have often seen by the dew in the fields, and in the wood, that he has not moved ten steps round about; when he has hit upon buckbean, (wattwäppling) or any other palatable food. In autumn and winter the hare sits close; but in October and November

* “ The old hares are called rambles, in the spring, when they stroll about to great distances to seek for the females.”

the dogs can easily enough get him up. It helps, as they say, to get the hare on foot, by shouts, shots, and rattles. One may very well use five or six, or even a greater number of dogs. In autumn the hare frequents the open country, and grounds covered with small juniper bushes; and when the snow falls it sits sometimes in the snow-drifts, and in the furrows of corn-fields. When it is hard weather it will remain two or three nights without going from its seat.* During a thaw it sits often on stones and in open places, but in severe cold in thickets and bushes. The hare is caught with snares in fences, or with the usual gins in woods and hedges. Roasted, it—especially a young hare—makes a good dish at table.”

“ I was once,” Mr. Greiff says, “at a hunt, when a female hare was shot, on opening of which seven young ones, all alive, were found and cast to the dogs; a bitch which had lately pupped, took one of the young ones, laid it in a bush, and licked and dried it; and we sportsmen had a difficulty to get it from her, as she constantly licked and caressed it, as if she wanted to give it suck. It was carried home, and fed with milk. Eight days afterwards, it was killed, by an unlucky accident, to the great mortification of all the hunting party.”

* “On new snow, I by accident found a hare that had not left its seat for three days.”

CHAPTER VI.

Wolves.—Pitfalls.—Anecdotes of Wolves.

DURING this little expedition, Mr. Falk felt some apprehensions for his dogs, as at that time there were a good many wolves prowling about the country; but owing to the uproar that we made in the forest, it is probable those ferocious animals kept at a distance.

Wolves are said to be particularly partial to dogs. Indeed, those animals usually picked up every one that was at large in this part of the country. Several were taken from both Risäter and Uddeholm. *Caresse* was the drawing-room pet at the latter mansion, and was as fat and as sleek as a mole; but happening to be star-gazing one evening, just outside the door, a famished wolf whipped her up in his horrid jaws, and was instantly across the lake with her.

Unless along with me in the forest, I rarely allowed my own dogs to be slipped from their couplings at this season of the year. This precaution was very necessary, as it not unfrequently

happened that the wolves were in the immediate vicinity of Lapp cottage. Once, indeed, a small drove, as I saw by their tracks, passed within ten paces of my dog-kennel.

On another occasion, a single wolf posted himself, in the middle of the day, within about fifty paces of the house; but only females were at home, and he therefore went off unmolested.

Wolves were not often to be seen at this period of the year in the wilds of the forest; their common resort being in the vicinity of villages and roads. Here they occasionally got hold of a stray pig, goat, &c.; but in the northern parts of Wermeland, they were less destructive than in the more southern districts of Sweden. This was owing to the cattle thereabouts being universally housed during the whole of the winter months.

Once now and then, however, the wolves made an attack upon domestic animals, even when under cover. An instance of the kind took place in the vicinity of Uddeholm, a few days before I first visited that part of the country;—the circumstance was as follows:—

A peasant, whose name I forget, had just turned into his bed for the night, when suddenly his ears were assailed by a most tremendous uproar in his cattle shed (Ladugård). On hearing the noise, he jumped up, and, though almost in a state of nudity, he proceeded into the building to see what was the matter; but the mystery was soon

explained, for he quickly made out the unwelcome visitor to be an immense wolf. This he gallantly seized by the ears, and at the same time called out most lustily for assistance.

His wife now came to his aid ; but though she was armed with a hatchet, with which she kept chopping away at the wolf's head, it was a long time before she could succeed in dispatching him. Indeed, it was said she only effected this at last by driving the handle of the hatchet down the throat of the beast. The skin of this animal subsequently came into my possession, but it was much injured from cuts.

During this rather arduous conflict the poor man's hands and wrists were bitten through and through by the wolf ; when I saw him, in fact, a short time subsequently, the wounds had not entirely healed. Before this marauder was destroyed he had slaughtered four goats, and would probably have killed the remainder of the poor creatures that were confined in the building, had he been left to himself a short time longer.

Wolves were occasionally caught by traps in the vicinity of my quarters. They were also not unfrequently taken in pitfalls, consisting of circular holes about twelve feet in depth and diameter. In their centres strong upright posts were affixed, which came up even with the surface of the ground. On the top of these posts, a small platform of fifteen or eighteen inches square was

placed ; when the trap was set, therefore, a chicken, duck, or small dog, was fastened alive on the platform ; a few twigs were now placed over the open space, and subsequently they were covered with straw, a great deal of which was scattered about, so that nothing in the slightest degree suspicious met the eye. If any animal, therefore, attempted to lay hold of the bait, he instantly tumbled headlong into the pit, from whence, from its depth, escape was next to impossible.

I once saw a wolf lying at the bottom of a pitfall. The poor creature had been a prisoner for more than a day, and was in a most pitiable condition ; in appearance, he was more dead than alive. Every one said he was only shamming, and that if he were once to reach *terra firma*, he would go off like lightning ; but I am inclined to think he was suffering from the combined effects of cold and starvation. We could not get him to move ; indeed, a man was obliged to descend into the pit, and absolutely to lay hold of him, before he would get on his legs ; but his spirit was so completely gone that he did not offer the slightest resistance. I presently, however, put a period to his miseries, by sending a ball through his head.

Mr. Falk had a pitfall at Risäter, in which, at one period, he caught a good many wolves ; but within the last two or three years he had taken very few of these animals.

When I was first in Wermeland, I was on a visit to Mr. Falk. On two occasions, at that time, a valuable pointer of mine disappeared: search was made every where, and at last the animal was found quietly seated at the bottom of the pitfall, into which he had tumbled headlong.

Foxes are very frequently taken by this contrivance. I heard of an instance of the kind which was attended with rather a ludicrous result. One of those animals was lying at the bottom of the pit, when a man, with the assistance of a ladder, was in the act of descending, for the purpose of destroying it: the fox, however, thought he might benefit by the convenience as well as his assailant; so, just as the man reached the ground, the fox sprang on to his shoulders, and then out of the pit in an instant.

Prior to that period this particular pitfall had always been a very successful one; but for a long time subsequently not a fox was caught in it. Numbers of these animals were traced on the snow to its brink; but the wary old gentleman, whose adventures I have just related, had probably given the fraternity a hint.

A pitfall is rather dangerous to domestic animals. I heard of an instance where three horses fell into one at the same time, when the poor creatures were so desperately injured, that they were obliged to be immediately killed.

When I was at Gefle, three or four years ago,

I met with much politeness and attention from Mr. Garberg, who was resident at that place. That gentleman had a very pretty cottage near to the town, where he usually spent the summer months. Here, as he was very fond of sporting, he kept a good many dogs. One day however, in the winter-time, the kennel-door was accidentally left open, when the wolves, which were very numerous thereabouts, quickly picked up four out of the six that were confined in the building.

Mr. Garberg stated farther, that the wolves, during the winter I speak of, had killed two dogs in the town of Gefle itself, and that within a short distance of his own house.

He told me, likewise, that a winter or two before, whilst a man was working in the forest, within a few miles of Gefle, he was attacked and desperately wounded by several wolves. His companion, who was at some little distance, on hearing his cries, immediately ran to his assistance, and, with his axe, fortunately succeeded in beating off the ferocious animals. He then took the wounded man on his back, and was conveying him to a place of safety; but after a while, fatigue obliged him to set down his burthen. This he had hardly done, when the wolves came on again more furiously than before; and it was not until he had cut down several of them that he succeeded in driving away the remainder. He

then, once more, took up his wounded companion, whose life he had twice saved by his gallantry, and fortunately succeeded in conveying him to a place of safety. Though the poor man was terribly mauled by the wolves, he finally recovered from his wounds.

Wolves are very fond of swine, and generally attack those animals, if they be at large during the winter. Lieutenant Oldenburg once witnessed a circumstance of this nature.

He was standing near to the margin of a large lake, which at the time was frozen over. At some little distance from the land a small aperture had been made in the ice for the purpose of procuring water: at this hole a pig was drinking. Whilst looking towards the horizon, Lieutenant Oldenburg saw a mere speck, or ball, as it were moving rapidly along the ice: presently, however, this increased considerably in size, and he then discovered it to be a wolf, which was making for the pig at top speed.

Lieutenant Oldenburg now seized his gun, which was immediately at hand, when he ran to the assistance of the pig; but before he got up to the spot the wolf had closed with the poor animal, which, though of a large-size, he tumbled over and over in a trice; the wolf, however, was so agreeably occupied with his prize, that he allowed Lieutenant Oldenburg to approach within a few paces of him; that gentleman then fired,

and so desperately wounded the beast in the body, that, though he went off for the moment, he was presently enabled to come up with him a second time, and dispatch him.

The pig was still alive, though the wolf had torn a piece of flesh as large as a man's foot (I use his own words) out of its hind-quarters; but the poor creature was so terribly frightened, that it followed him home like a dog, and would not leave his heels for a moment.

Lieutenant Oldenburg related another anecdote which came under his immediate notice. The circumstance happened in Norrland.

A boy, only eleven years of age, was one day standing at his father's door, when he espied a large wolf seated on the ground at a small distance. The gallant little fellow now ran into the house and seized hold of his father's gun, which fortunately happened to be loaded at the time; with this he advanced to within a few paces of the wolf, who, either from contempt of his antagonist, or from intending to make a meal of him, remained stationary, when he shot him through the head.

Mr. Herman Forsslöf, the incumbent of the parish of Gustaf-Adolph, related to me the following anecdote regarding wolves. The circumstance took place many years ago in the parish of Ärsunda, in Gestricksland, of which province Mr. Forsslöf was a native.

Whilst a poor soldier was one day crossing a large lake called Stor-sjön, it then being the depth of winter, he was attacked by a drove of wolves. He was armed only with a sword, but with this weapon he defended himself so gallantly, that he not only either killed or wounded several of his assailants, but he succeeded in driving off the remainder.

Some short time afterwards, however, the same drove of wolves again beset him; but he was now unable to extricate himself from his perilous situation in the same manner as before; for when he laid his hand upon his sabre, and attempted to draw it, he found it firmly frozen into the scabbard. This was in consequence of his having neglected to wipe the blood from the blade after the desperate conflict in which he had been engaged. It is almost needless to add, that as he was then defenceless, the ferocious beasts quickly killed and devoured him.

CHAPTER VII.

Elg.—Anecdotes.

ON the 31st of December we had twelve degrees of cold at sunrise ; the following day, the commencement of the new year, about an inch of snow fell in the vicinity of my quarters.

On the succeeding morning, Wednesday the 2nd of January, I was much gratified by a visit from an old and faithful follower of mine from Brunberg, a hamlet situated in the wilds of the forest, at some thirty miles to the north-east of Lapp cottage ; I was still more pleased, however, when he gave me the agreeable intelligence that he had a bear, which he supposed to be of a large size, “ringed” in the vicinity of that place.

This man’s real name was Henrick Mattsson. He had been in the army, where, to prevent the confusion that would naturally arise from few or none of the common soldiers having surnames, fictitious ones are generally given to them—such as the names of animals, birds, trees, &c. ; for this

reason, he had been dubbed Elg, or Elk, by which appellation he was only known throughout the country ; and by such, therefore, I shall hereafter designate him.

He was a peasant, and descended from Finnish ancestors, and was possessed of a small and poor farm in the vicinity of Brunberg: this he had either wholly or in part reclaimed from the forest by his individual exertions.

He was one of twelve children ; nearly the whole of whom lived until arrived at man's estate : but he was now left in the wide world with only a single brother, all the rest of his family, including his father and mother, being dead.

This was a sad mortality to take place in one family, from natural causes; though such, in many instances, was doubtless owing to the want of proper medical advice, of which, as I have said, there was a sad deficiency in the interior parts of the country.

He was in the prime of life, not being at this time more than about thirty-five years of age : though short in person, he was of a stout and robust make, and able to undergo great fatigue. Though nearly unlearned, he was a most intelligent man, and possessed of much better information than many who might be called his betters. Among his other capabilities, he was a capital shot with his rifle, and an excellent runner upon snow-

skates, of which implements I shall presently have occasion to speak.

I enter thus into particulars, as he was my constant attendant during the remainder of this particular season, as well as on other occasions ; and a more faithful and honest creature, which his countenance plainly indicated, or a better behaved man, I never met with in my life.

Elg had been accessory at the death of eighteen or twenty bears, many of which he had shot with his own gun. He had never been wounded by any of those animals, though, in the instance I am about to relate, he had incurred some degree of danger.

When he was only twelve years of age, and when residing with his father at Brunberg, the family were one night disturbed by the cattle, which were penned immediately near to the house ; from the noise these made, it was pretty evident that an unwelcome visitor was among them.

One of Elg's brothers, hearing this, jumped out of bed, when, catching up a gun that happened to be loaded, he ran out of doors, undressed as he was, to see what was the matter. The cause was soon explained, for he found the uproar to have arisen from the presence of an enormous bear, who had just helped himself to a goat, with which he was then in the act of making off. The man now fired ; but though the

beast was desperately wounded in the side, he was still enabled to make good his retreat.

The next morning, Elg, in company with two of his brothers, both of whom were grown-up men, and of course many years older than himself, went in pursuit of the bear. They had not proceeded more than four or five hundred paces into the forest, which immediately skirted the few enclosures about the house, when a dog they had along with them challenged to the beast in some long grass, at about one hundred paces distance. The animal was at this time lying upon the ground, and they therefore thought he was almost dead. When, however, they had approached to within about thirty paces of him, he suddenly reared himself up, and partly swung himself round; but whether this was done with the intention of attacking them, or making his escape, they of course had no means of ascertaining.

On this, Elg and one of his brothers, the other from some cause not having the opportunity, fired, when both of their balls, as it afterwards appeared, took effect; Elg's in the hind-quarters of the animal, where, from its small size, it could have done little injury, and his brother's in the shoulder; where, coming in contact with the bone, it flattened, and was equally inefficacious.

On receiving his wounds, the enraged brute instantly dashed at the party;—Elg, in his fright,

and the better to save himself, now threw away his gun, and ran for it, and luckily succeeded in making his escape. But his brother, that had just discharged his piece, was not so fortunate; for, though he sheltered himself behind a tree, the ferocious animal quickly caught him in his grasp, threw him down, and wounded him severely.

On witnessing this catastrophe, the brother, who had reserved his fire, ran up to within a very short distance of the scene of action; but until the dog, by his attacks, had drawn the bear a little on one side, he dared not shoot, for fear of hitting the wounded man; when this was the case, however, he quickly drove a ball into the body of the beast.

As this, unfortunately, did not take effect in any vital part, it only tended to make the animal more savage than before; for now leaving his prostrate foe, he dashed at his new assailant; but luckily, the latter, owing either to his superior agility, or to the wounded state of the bear, was enabled to elude the onset.

The bear, nevertheless, was not to be thus foiled; for, finding he could not overtake his new antagonist, he returned to the wounded man, who was by this time on his legs, and attempting to get out of the way; but being unable to accomplish this, owing to his injured state, he was again severely lacerated.

Whilst this tragedy was acting, the brother

who had just fired was not idle ; for, reloading his rifle as quickly as he was able, he once more ran in upon the bear, and sent another ball into his body. This again caused the animal to quit his prey, and to make after him a second time ; but fortunately this was his last effort ; for, being now altogether exhausted with his wounds and loss of blood, after proceeding some short distance, he sunk to the ground to rise no more. It was still necessary, however, to send a ball through the heart of the beast, before his miseries were put an end to.

During the whole of this bloody scene, Elg was a very near spectator ; for, sheltering himself behind a tree, at a very inconsiderable distance from the place of conflict, he continued shouting with all his might, in the hopes of being able to drive the bear away from his unfortunate brother. He had no other means of rendering him assistance, having thrown away his gun, as I have said, at the commencement of the affair.

On this occasion, the poor sufferer received nineteen wounds in his back and other parts of his body. He did not recover from the immediate effects of these for many weeks, and indeed Elg seemed to think they tended materially to shorten his life, as he died a little time afterwards.

This bear was among the very largest that had ever been seen in that part of the country. When he was skinned and dissected, nearly twenty bul-

lets, Elg stated, were found in different parts of his body, which he had received on former occasions.

One of these balls, and it was of a rather large size, was in the lungs of the animal, where it had so embedded itself, that the point by which it had entered was no longer perceptible.

The generality of these balls were, however, small, so that, in comparison with so large an animal, unless they took effect in some vital part, they would probably have little more effect than small shot.

From the number of balls this bear had previously received, it might almost be supposed he had, on some former occasion, escaped out of a skull; but possibly, from being an old marauder, he had, in numberless instances, been shot at by the peasantry and others, when attacking cattle in different parts of the country.

In corroboration of the fact of this bear having recovered after being wounded in so many different places on preceding occasions, I remember Jan Finne telling me of a bear that was killed at Dynsjö a few years previously, in whose body fourteen old balls were found.

If the bear receives his wounds in the summer time, they are far more likely to prove mortal than if it be in the winter season. At the latter part of the year, he will often recover after being almost made a sieve of: this, no doubt, arises from his digestive organs, &c. being at rest, when

his blood, in consequence, is in a less inflammatory state.

When Elg was only in the fourteenth year of his age, he distinguished himself in rather a remarkable manner. Along with another boy, still younger than himself, he was one day tending cattle in the summer-time, in the vicinity of Brunberg, when a large bear made a dash at the herd. This attack, however, from some cause or other, proved unsuccessful.

At this period, Elg was absent from the spot; but, on learning from his companion what had happened, he lost no time in following in the direction the beast had taken when making his retreat. He was accompanied by a dog, a mere cur; but before he had proceeded any considerable way, the latter challenged to the bear in a thick brake. Elg now shortly descried his shaggy antagonist in the opposite side of a little ravine, at some twenty-five paces distant from where he stood: but the attention of the animal was so much taken up with the attacks of the dog, that he did not seem to notice his approach.

Elg was armed with a gun, a mere plaything, as he described it, of only two feet in length, the lock of which was so defective, that, when in the act of discharging the piece, he was obliged to hold the cock back with his hand; yet, with this, he levelled, and fired at the breast of the bear, which happened to be turned towards him, and,

as luck would have it, to shoot the animal through the heart.

Elg now lost no time in running home, from which he was at an inconsiderable distance, to relate his good fortune ; but his story was hardly credited, until his father, and others who accompanied him back to the spot, had been eye-witnesses to the effects of his prowess. This, for a mere child, was certainly a gallant action ; though it was the less to be wondered at, as he had been bred among people, many of whom had made the pursuit of the bear a primary object of their lives.

A third instance, where Elg had been in some danger, was the following :—The place where the circumstance occurred, he pointed out to me during our wanderings together in the forest ; but this was at an after period of his life, and at only five or six years prior to the time of my visiting Scandinavia.

It was in the setting-in of the winter, and when the ground was but slightly covered with snow, that Elg and another peasant started off in company, for a very wild range of country to the southward of Brunberg, in the hopes that they might fall in with, and ring the track of a bear ; this being, as I have said, the most proper season for that purpose.

But their search proved unsuccessful ; and after the lapse of four or five days, during which they

had either bivouacked on the ground, or quartered at Sätterwalls, their provision being exhausted, they separated for their respective homes.

In the afternoon of the same day, and when Elg was alone, in a very wild part of the country, covered with much fallen timber and immense fragments of stone, he suddenly came upon the track of a bear; the next minute, and within a short distance from where he stood, he discovered, in the cleft of a great mass of rocks, the den of the animal.

As he had no confidence, however, (according to his own account,) in the lock of his rifle, he did not care to go immediately up to the den; he therefore mounted a pretty high stone, immediately overlooking it, at about fifteen paces distant.

From this position, he discovered the bear lying fast asleep near to the entrance of the den; and as he got sight of her ear, under which (supposing the side of the animal's head to have been towards him, as he imagined was the case,) is one of the most fatal places, he lost no time in levelling and discharging his rifle.

For a moment after he had fired, the bear lay still; and in consequence, Elg almost imagined she (for it was a female) was killed: had he thought otherwise, he would have had ample time to get out of her way; but presently the beast raised herself up, when, fixing her eyes steadily upon him, and uttering at the same time a terrific

growl, she dashed at him (to use his own expression) "with the rapidity of a bullet out of a gun," and was close upon him in almost the twinkling of an eye.

Very fortunately for Elg, the stone on which he was standing was situated on a declivity, the after part of it being some five or six feet from the ground: down this, in his hurry to escape, he tumbled all but headlong; it was well he did so, for the bear, followed by two of her cubs, which were more than half as large as herself, almost at the same instant made her spring, and passed clean and far over him.

In this situation, Elg lay for a short while, frightened, as he said, almost out of his senses; when finding all quiet, and supposing, as was the case, that the bears, from not seeing him, had taken themselves off to another part of the forest, he ventured to get up, and to reconnoitre the den; he then discovered, that besides the three which had made a leaping-bar of his person, a fourth had taken an opposite direction.

Though all four bears for this time made their escape, yet in the course of the eight or ten succeeding weeks, Elg, with the assistance of several other peasants, managed to kill the whole of them.

On taking the skin from the old bear, which he described to have been of a very large size, he found the ball which he had first fired at her, flat-

tened out, and set fast on the back part of her skull. By this, it would appear that he had mistaken the position in which she was lying, so that, instead of aiming at the root of her ear, as he imagined was the case, he had fired at her lengthwise.

Had his ball, however, been of any moderate size, this would not have been of much consequence; for, if his gun was properly loaded, I take it that, at so short a distance, her head must have been split to pieces.

These bears proved a rich prize; for their skins alone, independent of their flesh, produced about ten pounds, which was no inconsiderable sum in Sweden. This sum Elg was obliged to share equally with his companions; and, in consequence, his individual portion of the spoil amounted to a mere trifle—to much less, probably, than the value of the labour he had bestowed upon their capture. But the case would have been otherwise, had his ball taken proper effect in the first instance; for the entrance to the den was so narrow, that had he killed the old bear, the cubs could not have escaped; and the whole sum the animals produced, would therefore have been his alone.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sälje Bear.

It was on Wednesday the 2nd of January, as I have said, that Elg arrived at Lapp-cottage. As he stated that the snow was several inches deep in the country about Brunberg, I determined upon forthwith attacking the bear he had ringed near to that place, and of leaving the animal at Sälje (in which vicinity there was very little snow) alone for the present. On the evening of the same day, therefore, after making the few needful preparations, we proceeded on our journey in my sledge.

On reaching Sälje, which lay in our route, we sent for the peasants who had the bear ringed near to that hamlet. These people were, we now found, very anxious to ascertain if the animal was still within the circle, as from the quantity of rain that had recently fallen, and from the ground having for so long a period been bare of snow, it

was not improbable that he might have betaken himself to another part of the country. This is more particularly likely to happen in wet weather, as, if the water penetrates to his den, the bear very generally shifts his winter-quarters.

We pointed out to the peasants the great risk that would be run by beating the ring when there was so little snow upon the ground; as, in the event of our rousing the bear, and not succeeding in killing him, should a fresh fall of snow take place immediately afterwards, his tracks might be obliterated, and we, in consequence, might lose him altogether.

To this argument they would not listen, which was the less to be wondered at, as they had now waited so long for a fall of snow, that their patience was quite exhausted. The bear, however, was their property, and not mine; and an immediate search of the ring was therefore determined upon. But as the weather was very lowering at this time, which indicated that a snow-storm was not far distant, they agreed to postpone our expedition until after the following day.

We passed the night therefore at Sälje, though, as regarded myself, not very comfortably; for my apartment, which was merely intended for the summer, admitted the weather in all directions; and, as I was not very well provided with bed-clothes, I suffered not a little from the cold.

On the succeeding morning, Thursday the 3rd

of January, when the thermometer indicated a few degrees of frost, Elg and myself, having nothing better to do, struck into the forest with our dogs, to the south-east of Sälje, in the hopes of getting a bear on foot.

Our guide on this occasion was Abraham, the peasant who accompanied me during one of my summer excursions, and was one of those who had ringed the bear we were about to attack on the following day. But our search proved unsuccessful, for we were not fortunate enough to meet with a bear; nor did we see any indications that led us to suppose any of those animals were lying in the vicinity.

On the following morning, Friday the 4th of January, our party mustered at the first break of day, and shortly afterwards we set out for the purpose of searching the ring, which was at about seven or eight miles to the north-east of Sälje. As this, however, was several miles in circumference, and as we could not calculate upon beating it in one day, we provided ourselves with an axe or two, and a sufficiency of provision for a single night's bivouack in the forest.

There were six of us altogether: the four peasants who had ringed the bear, all of whom were armed with guns, Elg, and myself. We were also accompanied by my dogs, Paijas and Hector.

On reaching the ring, which was after a walk

of something better than two hours, we formed a line as at Tönnet, the people being at ten or twelve paces from each other. In the centre of this, with Elg to my right hand, I stationed myself.

I now caused Paijas to be slipped from his couplings, for, being old, he seldom ranged very wide; and he besides rarely gave tongue to any other animal than a bear. As we could not depend so much upon Hector, who often kept far ahead, and who frequently challenged to hares, birds, &c. we retained him still in a leash. I nevertheless gave instructions to the peasant who had the latter in charge, instantly to loose him in the event of a shot being fired.

As I could fully rely upon Paijas, and as I thought it more than probable that he would be the first to come upon the bear, supposing the animal to be within the ring, I directed the peasants to halt in the event of the dogs challenging, and to allow Elg and myself to advance alone. Our movements would, by this means, be conducted with less noise, and, in consequence, we should have a much better chance of coming upon the beast, which the peasants described to be of enormous size, before he had the time or inclination to leave his quarters.

After enjoining the most profound silence, we then commenced the search.

Thus we proceeded very slowly forward for

about a couple of hours. All this while we carefully examined the trees, to see if there were any indications by which we might have reason to suppose the bear was thereabouts. We also narrowly reconnoitred roots, fragments of rocks, and other suspicious objects that fell in our way.

At last, we came to a very thick and tangled brake, when Elg, who was near to me, observed, "This is a likely place for the fellow to have taken up his quarters." These words were hardly out of his mouth, when the gruff challenge of Paijas was heard at about a hundred and fifty paces in advance of us ; and from the deep manner of his baying, I knew to a certainty that he had found the bear.

At this time there was the merest sprinkling of snow in the trees, or even upon the ground, and in consequence my rifle was out of its case, and altogether loose in my hand. No other preparation, besides divesting myself of my gloves, was therefore necessary, when closely followed by Elg, who was the bearer of my double gun, I pushed as quickly forward as the thickness of the cover would permit, towards Paijas.

But the brake was so close, that it was not until I was within fourteen or fifteen paces of the bear, that I could get even an indistinct view of him. He was in an open lair, composed of moss (Korg), which was altogether above ground, and situated at the foot of a large pine. At some ten

paces distance from the beast, Pajjas stood baying most furiously. The dog, however, probably remembered the severe handling he had received on a former occasion, as he did not dare to go very near to the animal.

At this period the bear had only his head over the side of the lair. Though this was partially veiled by the intervening trees, it looked as large as a bushel-basket. Indeed, from the size and formidable appearance of the fellow, both probably magnified by my fears, I had no longer any reason to wonder that, when the peasant first fell in with the animal, he should have thought it prudent to walk off, rather than to make use of small shot, with which his gun was at the time loaded.

Though in our progress through the brake, Elg and myself had naturally made some little noise, the bear did not seem to notice our approach, his attention, apparently, being altogether taken up with Pajjas ; who, now that he saw us advancing, bayed ten times more furiously than before. At this time, the beast kept moving his head from the one side to the other of his lair, as if at a loss to understand the cause of the uproar.

Thinking there was no necessity to be in any very great hurry, I deliberately levelled my rifle at the root of his ear, the most vulnerable point then exposed to my view ; but at the instant I was going to pull the trigger, he changed the

position of his head, and exposed his front towards me. I then aimed at his forehead, but the moment I was thinking to split his skull open, he all of a sudden bolted from his lair, and in almost the twinkling of an eye, he was out of my sight. In the act of making his spring, and from his shaggy jacket, he looked as large as a pony. I sent a ball after him ; but, as I thought he was making to the left, whereas he went directly from me, I am inclined to think I shot wide of him, and that he escaped unhurt.

The quickness and agility with which the fellow sprang from his lair astonished me. Indeed, I can only liken it to the action of the wooden frogs, that have their tails fastened down with wax, with which children are in the habit of amusing themselves.

The peasants who were in the background, on hearing the shot, now slipped Hector from his couplings, who, together with Paijas, then went off after the bear. Elg and myself also, when I had reloaded my rifle, pursued at our very best pace.

At this time it was blowing from the southward ; and as the beast happened to take in a northerly direction, he of course went down the wind. This was an unfortunate circumstance, as it prevented us from hearing the challenges of the dogs in the distance, and consequently from making many a short cut ; the brute, besides, took

through the country, in a direct line, without making a single double. From these causes, we were necessitated to follow upon his tracks, which, from their being hardly perceptible in places, owing to the want of snow, caused our progress to be much slower than it otherwise would have been.

We continued the chase, nevertheless, for about an hour, when the dogs falling to heel, and seeing the improbability of coming up with the bear, we thought it best to give up all farther pursuit for that time, and to endeavour to ring the animal afresh. This is not usually a difficult task, as, if the bear, after being roused from his den in the winter season, be left unmolested, he commonly prepares another lair for himself in less than twenty-four hours afterwards.

We now lighted a fire to guard ourselves against getting chilled, for we were much heated with the violent exercise we had taken ; and when the peasants came up, which they did shortly afterwards, we were glad to break our fast by feasting on the contents of our knapsacks.

The result of this chase more than annoyed me ; for, had I fired in my usual quick manner in the first instance, it is not improbable I might have put an end to the bear. But by attempting to place a ball with mathematical precision, I took too much time, and the animal, in consequence, got off unhurt. This was not the worst part of

the business, for, in the event of a snow-storm, with which we were every instant threatened coming on, there was every probability of the tracks of the animal being lost, and that he, in consequence, would escape altogether. Had this happened, I should have been abused by every one for rousing the beast, which, it was supposed, was the same that, for several preceding years, had committed great ravages between the Klar and the Knon, when there was so little snow upon the ground.

It was now about two o'clock in the afternoon, when the peasants, seeing the chances were in favour of the bear, became anxious to sell me, which they had hitherto declined doing, all right and title to the animal. But the weather then bore too lowering an aspect to allow of my entering blindfold into such a speculation. I nevertheless offered them a certain gratuity in the event of their again succeeding in ringing the beast, to which proposition they gladly acceded.

Our party now separated; the four peasants to encircle the bear, whilst Elg and myself, as we could be of no assistance, together with the dogs, faced for Sälje. The peasants divided; two of the number kept over the tracks of the animal, and the remainder below them, fixing upon a certain point to meet at nightfall, which was then not very far distant. Thus they were enabled to complete a ring in half the usual space of time.

At this period we were about nine or ten miles distant from Sälje ; but though Elg and myself pushed on at our best pace, owing to the darkness of the night, and the badness of the ground, it was seven o'clock, or four hours after sunset, before we reached that place.

I had intended, as I have said, proceeding forthwith to Brunberg, that I might search for the bear Elg imagined he had ringed in the vicinity of that hamlet ; but the ill success we had just met with put this notion quite out of my head for the present ; for, independently of not caring to rouse another bear, when there was so little snow upon the ground, it was necessary for us to see after the one we had already on foot.

On the following morning, therefore, I got into my sledge, and headed back to Lapp-cottage. At this time it was snowing pretty fast, which made me rather apprehensive the tracks of the bear we had chased during the preceding day would be lost altogether. But before starting, I despatched Elg to the northward, that he might be in readiness to assist the peasants, should his services be required in ringing the beast ; or, if the men should have succeeded in accomplishing that desirable object, he might see that the ring was secure. In the event of the track being altogether lost, however, I directed Elg to send an express forthwith to me at Lapp-cottage. In that case, we proposed beating the whole of the

surrounding country, which would have given us a chance of retrieving the brute.

On Sunday, the 6th of January, there were fourteen degrees of cold at sunrise, and on the afternoon of the same day, two or three inches of snow fell. In the evening, Elg and the Sälje peasants arrived at Lapp-cottage, bringing me the agreeable intelligence that they had succeeded in again ringing the bear: this was at no very considerable distance from where we had discontinued the pursuit of the animal on the Friday afternoon. The people, it appeared, nearly encircled him on the evening of that day, when, bivouacking in the forest for the night, they completed the ring at an early hour on the following morning.

It was very fortunate they succeeded in accomplishing their object thus early, for in the course of the same day there fell several inches of snow, and the tracks of the animal became in consequence altogether obliterated.

They stated that the new ring was of a large size; it being six or seven miles in circumference. But it was necessary to make it of a considerable extent in the first instance, for fear of again disturbing the bear: they had intended, however, materially to reduce its size, by cutting off angles (Klyfva af); but from the snow which fell so immediately afterwards obliterating his tracks, it became impossible to accomplish that operation.

The peasants having performed their part of the contract, I paid them the stipulated price, with which, and probably thinking they had much the best of the bargain, the bear being then at large in the forest, they returned well pleased to their homes.

Though I had now reason to suppose that the beast was safely ringed, I thought it undesirable to attack him for some little while ; for there was still very little snow in the forest thereabouts, and owing to his having been so recently disturbed, the chances of our being able to steal upon him whilst in his quarters were very slight. In the interim, therefore, we thought it best to proceed to Brunberg, to search the ring in the vicinity of that place.

As it was necessary, however, that Elg should more fully reconnoitre the ring than he had hitherto done, and also that he might procure a person in whom confidence could be placed, to look after it during our absence, I directed him to accompany the peasants back to Sälje, and to meet me, after accomplishing the object of his journey, on the evening of the following day, at that place.

CHAPTER IX.

Journey to Brunberg.—Accident to Sledge.—Woman frozen to death.—Shooting Bears from a Gäll.—Bear-traps.—Brunberg.

At daylight on the succeeding morning, Monday, 7th of January, after directing my landlord to convey my sledge and baggage to Sälje, I took my dogs and a guide along with me, and, striking into the forest, I proceeded on foot for the same destination.

I was in hopes I might have fallen in with a bear in the vicinity of Gäll-sjön, a lake situated at some few miles to the N.E. of my quarters; but that good fortune did not attend me, though I met with an old lair where one of those animals had passed the winter months some few years previously. Immediately near to this den lay a young pine, thicker than my leg, which the beast had cut in two with his fangs.

At nightfall, and after having beaten a very wild range of forest to the northward of Gäll-sjön, we faced for Sälje, where we arrived a little

after it was dark. Here Elg also, having fulfilled my instructions, shortly afterwards made his appearance.

At daylight on the following morning, Tuesday the 8th of January, we had twenty-four degrees of cold. At this time, my sledge was to the door, and we were on the point of starting for Brunberg, when the horse, taking alarm at the bells attached to the harness, bolted without his driver, and went off at full speed.

This was not a very agreeable occurrence; but the adventure ended much better than I anticipated; for though, after the lapse of about ten minutes, the horse was brought back again with the broken shafts dangling at his heels, the sledge itself, together with the baggage, had not, as we afterwards ascertained, received the slightest injury.

The accident, however, delayed us for a short time, and indeed altogether prevented us from proceeding in my Finlandeze sledge, in consequence of suitable shafts not being procurable at the instant. But this was of the less consequence, as I had another sledge, which I occasionally used for the conveyance of baggage, lying at Sälje; and in this we shortly afterwards proceeded on our journey.

About four miles beyond Sälje we came to Näs, a rather considerable hamlet situated upon the Klar. Here we bargained with a peasant to

convey us to Brunberg, there being no regular post to that place, then at something more than fourteen miles distance, for which we agreed to give him less than three shillings of our money.

Our route to Brunberg lay over Moss-sjön, near to which we had recently killed the four bears. The shores of this lake, and the morasses, &c. in its vicinity, is a favourite resort for capercali in the winter, and we had therefore hoped to have fallen in with a pack or two of those birds. In this, however, we were disappointed, which was probably attributable to the stormy state of the weather, as at such times the capercali seldom sit high upon the pines, whence they may be seen from a distance, but are mostly to be met with on the ground, or in the body of the trees, in which situation they are not of course so easily discernible.

Towards the afternoon, and soon after passing Moss-sjön, Elg and myself left the peasant to make the best of his way to Brunberg, with the sledge and dogs; whilst, in the hopes of falling in with something or other, we ourselves took a cast through the forest, and faced on foot for that place. But with the exception of a wounded capercali, which Elg said had been injured by a trap, we did not kill a single head of game, of any sort or kind. I managed, however, to miss a black-cock with my rifle.

On our way through the forest, Elg related to me an affecting circumstance. During the early

part of the same winter, a poor woman in the vicinity of Brunberg was missed from her home. On this becoming known, an immediate search of the adjacent country took place ; but though there were a considerable number of persons, and Elg among the rest, engaged in the search, it was not until after the lapse of several days that she was found. The poor creature, who was lying at the foot of a pine, was then a corpse, having perished without doubt from the severity of the weather.

Other instances also came to my knowledge, where people, and children in particular, had been missed from their homes. When circumstances of this kind occurred, and the neighbours were unable to find the lost individual, information was sent to the Länsmän, and, in consequence, a large portion of the population of the district was at once ordered out to search the surrounding forests.

A little before we reached Brunberg, Elg pointed out to me, between three pines growing immediately near to each other, and at some twenty-five or thirty feet from the ground, a small stand, or *gäll*, as it is termed in Sweden. This he had erected himself, and from hence he had at different periods shot three large bears.

His plan of proceeding, which was common throughout the northern forests, was the following. During the winter months, he would deposit the carcass of a cow or horse immediately near

to the gäll. When the bear, therefore, left his winter-quarters, and when, from the difficulty of procuring sustenance, in the early part of the summer, he is roaming the forest in every direction in search of food, the smell of the carrion not unfrequently tempted him to the spot.

Elg visited this lure nearly daily ; and when he found a bear had been feasting upon it, he lost no time in perching himself up in his gäll. As it is during the night-time, however, that these animals most commonly feed, he seldom got into his stand until the shades of evening were setting in. Here, unless the bear made his appearance previously, he remained in the most profound silence, and with all his eyes about him, until the sun was well above the horizon on the following morning.

This silence and watchfulness, indeed, were very necessary, for Elg described the approach of these animals to the carrion to be in general so cautious, that the slightest noise would have alarmed them. Soon after sunset, and a little before sunrise, he stated to be the time at which the bear most commonly made his appearance.

In one instance, Elg neglected to look after his lure for some few days : of this the bears had fully benefited, for, on his return, he found they had devoured nearly the whole of it. For that particular season, therefore, as no other carrion was procurable, his sport was at an end.

Poor Elg sometimes suffered very much from

the severity of the weather, when posted on his stand. On one occasion, from waiting for fourteen or fifteen successive nights, during which, though he heard the bear rustling among the bushes in the vicinity, he was never fortunate enough to see him, he caught so severe a cold upon his lungs, that he was confined to his bed for the succeeding fortnight or three weeks. From the effect of this chill, indeed, he never, according to his own account, perfectly recovered.

One of the three bears that Elg shot from the gäll of which I am speaking, fell dead at the instant he fired; but the other two ran for some little distance before life was extinct. The growl that one of the brutes gave on receiving his mortal wound, he described to be most terrific: to use his own expression, it made the forest echo again.

On one occasion, Elg shot at, and unfortunately missed, an old she-bear with two cubs. This was from the night being so dark that he was unable to take a proper aim, and in consequence they all went off unhurt, or only one of them, at least, was slightly wounded.

When a bear has killed a horse, or other large animal, (for if it be a sheep, goat, &c. he generally devours it at once,) a gäll is not unfrequently erected near to the spot, for the purpose of destroying the beast. But in such cases the chances of success are very problematical; for though, if the part of the forest where the slaughter takes

place be kept quiet, the bear will occasionally return to devour the remainder of his prey, such is not, I apprehend, generally the case: this originates probably from his entertaining suspicions that all is not right; and, in consequence, he exerts, in a greater degree than ordinary, the fine senses of hearing and smelling with which Nature has endowed him.

On several different occasions, Elg erected a gäll under the above circumstances; but in no instance did the bear again return to the carrion. He more than once, however, heard those animals rustling among the trees in the vicinity; but their fears, probably, got the better of the cravings of their stomach.

In one instance, Elg watched the carcass of a horse that a bear had slaughtered, for a fortnight; and when his patience was exhausted, another peasant took his place in the gäll, for the like period of time; but all was unavailing, for the beast never again came back to his victim.

Mr. Falk makes mention of the gäll: I shall therefore transcribe what he says upon the subject.

“ It often happens that the bear may be shot in the following manner. After he has killed an animal, a gäll is built between two trees, twelve feet from the ground, near to the prey, in which two or three persons sitting can wait for him until he comes to make his repast. He gene-

rally makes his appearance the first or second afternoon at sunset, if the carcass is allowed to remain untouched, and all is silent. In winter, also, dead horses may with success be conveyed into the forest, and laid, covered with branches, in those places where the bears usually resort on leaving their dens. At this time the branches are removed from the carrion, and a gäll built, which is used as before described. The bear, after his long winter lethargy, is very hungry, and searches for sustenance wherever it can be found; and therefore, this artifice very often succeeds."

During the summer before the last, an immense bear killed a cow at not very many miles distance from Lapp-cottage. On this, I erected a gäll immediately near to the carcass. It simply consisted of a few boughs, so interwoven together that I could not well tumble out, and was situated between two pines, which grew pretty close to each other, at about twenty feet from the ground.

In this stand I posted myself for five successive nights; but to my mortification, the bear did not make his appearance. It was near midsummer, and I did not therefore suffer very much from the cold. To protect myself from that evil, besides, I always kept my boat-cloak up in the gäll. My great enemies were the mosquitoes, which, had it not been for the veil which I

wore on these occasions, would have been very annoying.

I was always quite alone, and generally armed only with one gun ; but I did not, I apprehend, incur much risk, as I never heard of a bear making an attack upon a man under similar circumstances. On the contrary, indeed, the beast is always said to run, if he be able, the moment a shot be fired from the gäll.

I was in the habit of taking post in my gäll, which was situated in the wilds of the forest, and at a considerable distance from any habitation, as the shades of evening were setting in. At that time, I used to proceed with all imaginable silence and caution towards the carcass, which was shrouded in a densely thick brake, in the hopes that the bear might be feasting upon his victim, and that I might then be enabled to steal upon him. Had I come in contact with the fellow at these times, I should have had my own battle to fight; I trusted, however, to John Manton to get me out of the scrape.

There was something interesting in being perched up in my gäll. The gloomy solitude of the forest in the night season—the melancholy hootings of the great horned owl, which were to be heard every now and then in the distance—the slaughtered cow lying in a small glade before me, mangled in a dreadful manner by the fangs of the bear ; and lastly, the excitement kept up

by momentarily expecting the rugged monster himself to make his appearance.

It is always desirable to erect a gäll very high up in the pines. In that case, a bear cannot so well scent a person when posted in his stand. If it be in the height of summer, however, this is the less likely to happen, as the carrion often emits so noisome an odour, that the effluvia proceeding from a man must be little perceptible.

I have heard of several ridiculous anecdotes relating to shooting bears from a gäll. In one instance, two persons were posted in their stand, when, after waiting a while, the bear made his appearance: but just as they were in the act of firing, the gäll suddenly gave way, when, to their great discomfiture and consternation, they were both precipitated to the ground.

On another occasion, two men were posted in their gäll. But when Bruin made his appearance, his grim looks so completely upset the nerves of these redoubted heroes, that they dared not to fire, and he in consequence went off unhurt. These worthies resided not far from Uddeholm.

I never remember hearing of but one accident originating from shooting bears in the manner of which I am now speaking, and that was in some degree attributable to imprudence and bad management. I subjoin the particulars, which I extracted from a Swedish Newspaper.

“ Näs (in Dalecarlia), the 31st May.

“The following dreadful and melancholy occurrence took place here lately. A peasant named Esbjor Ersson, in Millenberg, an experienced and excellent bear-hunter, lay in wait for a bear during the night of the 20th instant, in a gäll near some carrion, which had been placed out for the purpose, and to which the bear had several times paid visits.

“The expected guest made his appearance about midnight, and was saluted with a shot, which apparently had the desired effect, for the bear fell, and seemingly lay dead. The peasant, who was provided with two loaded guns, waited a considerable time in the gäll, with the intention of firing again, on the bear's making the least movement ; but, as no motion or appearance of life was shown, he returned home, rejoiced at his good luck, to procure assistance to carry off the animal. Four men were soon procured to assist him ; among these was a soldier, who, as a good sportsman, wished to take his gun with him ; but which was overruled by Esbjor Ersson, who assured him that the bear was dead, and that the gun would only be a hindrance, as the beast was uncommonly large, and quite heavy enough for them to carry home. On their return to the spot, they found, to their great surprise, that the bear had disappeared ; but the soldier's dog, who had accidentally followed them, soon discovered him at some distance, and announced his presence by loud barking. The soldier first approached, but the bear, mad with rage, rushed at him, and he being unarmed, took to his heels. The others were empty-handed and without weapons. Esbjor Ersson, alone, had an axe, with which he boldly advanced towards the bear, although warned and entreated by his comrades not to expose his life. The bear raised himself upon his hind-legs : Esbjor Ersson, with a strong arm, swung round his axe and dealt him a powerful blow ; but the shaft broke, and the beast instantly closing upon him, brought him to the ground. The enraged animal then threw himself upon him, bit him horribly, so that his face was dreadfully mangled, his cheek-bones being literally pressed together, his skull laid bare, the brains torn out, and, to complete the bloody revenge, his right

arm was broken, and the fingers eaten off from the hand. Overcome with horror and affright, the men hastened back, and alarmed the neighbouring huntsmen, who, advancing to the attack, succeeded, after several shots, in despatching the ferocious beast, and in extricating from his grasp the bloody and disfigured corpse; which was conveyed home by a crowd of people, who had collected on the occasion. The individual who, by his intrepidity, (or, as it may perhaps be termed) rashness, thus lost his life, has left a widow and three young children in extreme poverty."

Bears are often destroyed in the Wermeland, and adjacent forests, by traps of various constructions, as well as by the gäll.

The traps commonly made use of for the purpose, are not unlike those that used to be set (to our shame be it spoken as regards the preservation of game,) for our fellow-creatures in England. These traps, however, are never fastened to the spot, as, if such be the case, and the bear be caught by the leg, he almost invariably bites, or tears, off the imprisoned limb. The Wermelanders and Dalecarlians, and the like is, I believe, the case in other parts of Scandinavia, fasten the chain attached to the trap to a small log, and as this follows the beast in his movements, he is thus prevented from exerting to the utmost the more than Herculean strength with which Nature has endowed him. It is said that, to get rid of this log, the bear resorts to numerous devices; among others he buries it, and then, by making a sudden and desperate plunge, en-

deavours to relieve himself from the incumbrance. During my stay in Wermeland, I knew a large bear to be killed having only three legs, or rather paws, remaining, she having lost the fourth in a trap, similar to those of which I am speaking, six years previously. This beast was shot in a skall, but before she fell, she rather severely wounded one of the people.

When a steel-trap is set for a bear, the lure, or carrion, is not, I believe, fastened to it in the usual manner, but in such a situation, in the cleft of a rock, or attached to a tree, for instance, that the beast cannot seize it without passing over that destructive engine. These traps are only set in such parts of the forest as are little resorted to by either man or beast, and of course, due notice is given to the population of the surrounding district; but should any accident happen to either the one or the other, the owner is liable, as I have said elsewhere, for the consequence.

To proceed with my narrative.—On reaching Brunberg, which was situated in the very wilds of the forest, I took up my quarters with a nephew of Elg's. Here, as I obtained a good room to myself, and had my bedding and other things along with me, I was far from being uncomfortably circumstanced.

Like most other hamlets, or even single dwellings, one meets with in the Northern forests,

Brunberg was situated on the summit of a hill. It consisted of four or five families, all of whom were descendants of the Fins who settled in Wermeland, as I have before remarked, about one and a half century ago.

There was little grain grown in the few inclosures in the vicinity of Brunberg; that which was produced was principally from Svedje-falls in different parts of the surrounding country. The inhabitants, however, were possessed of good dairy farms, and had an abundance of cattle, sheep, &c.; not only to supply their little wants, but by the sale of their surplus produce, such as cheese, butter, &c. they were enabled to purchase necessities of which they might stand in need. They had abundance of that useful and nutritious root the potato.

The people at Brunberg had no Sätterwalls; indeed, these were unnecessary, as, from the hamlet being surrounded by a boundless forest, an abundance of pasturage was to be met with in the vicinity of their dwellings. They were enabled also to store up as much hay, &c. on the neighbouring morasses, as was required for their cattle during the winter months.

The peasants of this hamlet were the proprietors of their little farms; they were therefore subjected to no other burthens besides such as were levied for the good of the State. From being

thus enabled to enjoy the fruits of their own industry, they were naturally in comfortable circumstances.

Though it may appear singular, it is undoubtedly true, that the farther one proceeds into the interior of Scandinavia, where there are few great landed proprietors, forges, &c. the greater degree of comfort may generally be observed among the peasantry. This has been noticed by all travellers who have traversed the more northern of the Swedish provinces. Manufactories, of whatever nature they be, may certainly tend to enrich individuals; but, to my mind, they add little to the happiness of the community at large. In what parts of any country in the world are such scenes of vice and squalid misery to be witnessed, as in manufacturing districts?

Among other individuals who entertain similar opinions to myself regarding the enviable lot of the population of the Northern parts of Scandinavia, I may name a very highly-talented friend of mine, Mr. John Musgrave, son of Sir Richard Musgrave, Bart. of the county of Waterford. This gentleman, who has travelled much in Sweden and Norway, and who is probably possessed of better statistical and other information respecting those countries than almost any man either within or out of Great Britain, says in a letter to me: "I saw more real comfort and more appearance of general abundance among the inhabitants

of the shores of the Gulf of Bothnia, than I have ever witnessed in any other agricultural country, except Flanders, and some few parts of England. Their condition is well expressed by their own word, *sielf ständighet*, or independence, without which there is no happiness."

CHAPTER X.

Chasse and death of the Brunberg Bear.

ON the succeeding morning, Wednesday the 9th of January, Elg and myself started in a sledge, at the break of day, to look for his bear : this was ringed on the eastern face of a rather lofty mountain, four or five miles to the eastward of Brunberg.

There were two peasants along with Elg when he encircled the animal ; both of whom were to share equally with himself in the spoil, in the event of the beast being doomed to die. But as these resided at a considerable distance from Brunberg, Elg had, on the preceding evening, sent off an express to desire them to meet us in the morning at a given spot.

On our reaching the place of rendezvous, however, the men had not made their appearance ; and as the weather was stormy and comfortless, and some little snow was falling, we lost no time in getting up a good fire, by which, in some degree, we consoled ourselves for their absence.

Here an accident was nearly happening to Pajjas, the only dog we had along with us: he was fastened to the back of the sledge that had conveyed us from Brunberg, which was standing immediately near to us; when, from some cause or other, the horse, which was still attached to the vehicle, took fright, and was bolting off at the full gallop: but very fortunately, I was at this moment in such a situation as to be enabled, by throwing myself upon the animal, to retard his career, and thus prevent mischief. Had the horse once fairly started, the dog must inevitably have either had his neck broken, or have been dashed to pieces among the trees.

In less than half an hour after we had got up a fire, we were joined by the peasants. We now despatched our sledge back to Brunberg; and when the people had rested themselves for a short time, we set off for the ring, which was then immediately near to us.

The ring on this occasion was of an unusual size—not much less, certainly, than ten miles in circumference: it embraced, indeed, almost the whole of the eastern face of the mountain; but this, from circumstances, was unavoidable.

The fact was, the day on which Elg and his companions started the bear, (they being in the forest for the express purpose of looking for one of these animals,) they took this immense circle around the beast, as well for the fear of coming

too near upon and disturbing him anew, as that it was only in places there was a sufficiency of snow to enable them properly to effect their purpose. They had intended, however, at a subsequent period, materially to have reduced the size of the ring; but on the succeeding day a thaw came on, and in a very short time the ground, except in patches, was altogether bare of snow. In such weather, of course, they dared not to go near to that part of the forest; for, had they then started the bear, they would probably have lost his tracks, and he in consequence would have made his escape.

Though this ring was so very extensive that it would have taken so small a party as ours two or three days to have searched it properly, yet, from the knowledge the people possessed of the most likely brakes, they were of opinion that, if the animal was within it, we should presently succeed in getting him on foot. In this, as the event proved, they were not altogether wide of the mark.

When Elg and his companions first started this bear, it was out of an almost impenetrable brake, in the very thickest part of which he had formed a den, by excavating the ground to a very great depth. A lair of this kind is called in Sweden *jord graf*. Though the animal had intended this as his winter-quarters, he had not taken possession of it at the time he was disturbed by the

people; but he was lying on some few pine branches, (*gran qwistar*,) which he had torn from the adjacent trees.

When the bear thus reposes in the immediate vicinity of his den, it is called in Sweden lying *päbrätt*, or on the watch. It is asserted by many, that the animal always adopts this course before he retires to his winter-quarters, that he may ascertain if the spot be secure and free from molestation. Possibly, however, it may arise from the temperature being mild when he first lies down, and that, in consequence, he requires less protection than at an after period, when the weather becomes more severe.

At the time Elg and his companions first roused this bear, they were not fortunate enough to get a view of him; though they were so near, that they distinctly heard the rustling of the boughs, as he made his way through the thicket. But as on this occasion their movements were conducted with great silence, and as they had no dog along with them, they seemed to be of opinion that the bear, from having been little alarmed, had not improbably gone back to this den, which he had prepared with so much care and labour; and this, in consequence, was the first point for us to reconnoitre.

At the time of our expedition, there was about four or five inches of snow upon the ground generally; but in particular parts of the forest, where

much that had fallen in the early part of the winter was still remaining, it was very much deeper. There was but little in the trees however, which was owing to the boisterous state of the weather; the wind having either blown it down, or prevented it from making a lodgement.

On this occasion, I carried my double-gun, and Elg my rifle. The better to protect the locks of the former, which were on the common principle, from the snow, I had, previously to starting in the morning, dropped a little melted tallow from a candle, on the junction of the pans with the barrels. By this mean, (with the assistance of the piece of loose leather I was in the habit of carrying over my locks,) my gun for a single discharge was rendered nearly water-proof. This was a common expedient of mine, when I had an intention of attacking a bear. At such times, indeed, a miss-fire might cost a man his life; and it is therefore always desirable to adopt every possible precaution.

As I conceived that had not Paijas been loose when we recently attacked the bear near to Sälje, we should probably have come in upon the fellow before he was well awake, and thus have been spared the mortification of seeing him walk off his own master, I determined in this instance the dog should not be slipped from the leash until we had beaten some of the most likely parts of the ring; and I therefore directed the peasants

to follow with him, at some distance, upon our track.

Elg and myself, in the most profound silence, now faced for the brake, from whence himself and his companions had started the bear some weeks previously ; but this was so excessively close, that we could hardly force our way through it. We had not, however, proceeded very far, when Elg pointed out to me, at some few paces distance, the entrance to the den, which, from being confined and enveloped with brushwood, was then hardly perceptible. To this, as may readily be imagined, I was not long in making my approaches ; when, stationing myself immediately near to its entrance, I stood prepared to give the animal a warm reception, in the event of his being within the lair, and attempting to make his escape. But the beast was not within the den ; for benefiting by the hint he had received, he had taken himself off to another part of the forest.

The den was excavated on level ground, and nearly in a perpendicular direction. It was of an extraordinary depth, not less, certainly, than six feet. Though its entrance was very narrow and confined, the lower part of it, to judge by probing it with a long stick, was roomy and capacious.

The people were now not a little disconcerted, for they had fully anticipated that the beast would have found his way back to this lair. This

however not being the case, there was nothing left for us but to search the other parts of the ring, which we therefore set about doing almost immediately.

Some little while afterwards we came to another thicket, which was so close and tangled, that we had no little difficulty in forcing our way through it.

At this time we were in line, and only a few paces apart from each other, Elg being to my left, and one of the peasants to the right of me. Thus we slowly proceeded forward, keeping all the while the most guarded silence, and carefully examining every thing of a suspicious nature that fell in our way.

At last, I came to a small partial opening in the brake, when, at about fifteen paces ahead of me, though in the thickest of the cover bordering on the glade, a little rising, or hillock, for the moment attracted my attention. At this time, I was rather too far removed from Elg ; and as the peasant who was to my right was in the line for the suspicious object, without farther reconnoitering it I wheeled to my left, and again entered the thicket from which I had just emerged.

But I had not taken more than a few steps, when a low whistle (the preconcerted signal) from the peasant to the right of me, announced that he had come upon the beast ; and it instantly flashed

across my mind, which was the fact, that what I had just seen was his den. In some three or four seconds, therefore, I had retraced my steps to the little opening, when, at about ten or twelve paces distant, I saw the fellow as through a veil,—for he was deeply shrouded by the surrounding young pines, as he was rearing himself from his lair. The locks of my gun, which was loose in my hand, were at this time on the full-cock, and not caring to let the animal go off as the one at Sälje, I quickly took a rather snap-shot, and, as luck would have it, placed a ball from one of my barrels, at the back of his ear, when he instantly sank down to rise no more. As he still, nevertheless, exhibited some small signs of life, I ran close in upon him, when, with my second barrel, I gave him the *coup de grace*, by splitting his skull open with another ball.

On hearing the shots, the peasant, who was leading Pajjas at some distance in the rear, slipped him from his couplings, when he quickly came up to the scene of action; but though the bear was quite dead, it was several minutes before the dog could muster courage enough, like a burnt child who dreads the fire, to lay hold of the animal.

We now dragged the beast from his lair, which was situated in an immense ant-hill, (myr stack,) in which he had buried almost the whole of his carcass. Here he had as comfortable a berth as

could well be conceived ; and here he might have set one hundred degrees of cold at defiance.

In spite, however, of being thus snugly housed, and of the very guarded silence and caution with which we had proceeded, he had taken the alarm, and, as I have just shown, was on the point of bolting, when I was lucky enough to shoot him.

Our prize proved to be a he-bear, though not so large a one as I had been led to expect from the previous representation of the people. He was in very good condition.

All things considered, this little expedition ended rather fortunately ; for, had I been a second or two later, the beast would probably have been off from his lair, in the same manner as the one at Sälje, and, for the time at least, have escaped. Indeed, if Paijas had been at large, he would most likely have been in upon the bear long before we could have come up ; in which case, from the extreme shyness of the animal, it is hardly probable we should have got a view of him upon that day.

We now greatly regretted having sent home the sledge ; for, had it waited an hour longer, we being less than that time in the ring, it might have conveyed the bear to Brunberg ; we however instantly despatched one of the people for another of those vehicles.

As the greater part of the day was then before us, and as we thought it possible we might have

hit upon the wrong bear, we thought it best to make a cast over the ring ; but our search proved unsuccessful, and, indeed, we did not fall in with a single head of game of any sort or kind. Towards nightfall, therefore, we faced for Brunberg, where, on our arrival, we were glad to find the bear had preceded us by several hours.

In the course of the evening, the animal was skinned and cut up. At this operation, nearly all the peasants in the vicinity of Brunberg, together with several Dalecarlians, who were on their way from their native province to Elfvedal, were present, and assisted.

Whilst this was going on, the pot was on the fire, and a plentiful repast, composed principally of the blood, liver, heart, &c. of the animal, was preparing. When the meal was ready, the assembled party did ample justice to the viands that were set before them, all seeming to think our venison was most excellent.

This was the first bear that had been killed in the vicinity of Brunberg for several years ; and it may therefore be readily supposed that not a few cups were drained to the bottom, to commemorate the successful issue of the day's sport.

For the reasons I have already given, as I had not made any agreement to the contrary, this bear belonged to Elg and his companions. That being the case, I only took possession of the hams, fat, &c. of the animal.

CHAPTER XI.

Beating for a Bear.—Capercali and Black-cock shooting in the winter season.—The Lynx.—The Wild-cat.—The Badger.—Snow-storm.—Return to Lapp-cottage.

As we did not feel perfectly satisfied that the bear we had killed was the one which had been encircled by Elg and his comrades, we thought it best to beat out the remainder of the ring.

The next morning, therefore, Elg, together with another peasant and myself, started at the first dawn of day for that purpose. On this occasion we took all the dogs with us; and as they were fresh, and the snow not too deep, they hunted capitally. But all our endeavours to find another bear were unavailing, and we therefore concluded that the beast we had just killed was the only one within the ring.

In the course of the afternoon, we struck over the mountain, on whose eastern face the ring was situated. The sides of this were deeply covered with pine forests; but near to its summit were extensive wastes, with here and there a few strag-

gling trees, which were a favourite resort for capercali during the winter season : we, however, only fell in with one or two birds. This we attributed to the tempestuous state of the weather, it blowing almost a gale of wind at the time ; indeed, the appearance of the heavens portended a heavy snow-storm was not far distant.

With a good rifle, capercali shooting in the winter-time is a fine diversion. At that season, as I have said, the male birds usually pack, and are often to be met with in considerable numbers in the vicinity of the numerous lakes and morasses with which the Scandinavian forests abound. But the great difficulty is to find them in the first instance, for one may occasionally wander a day or two in the wilds of the forest, without meeting with a pack, or even a single bird. If a pack be once found, however, the sportsman may generally manage to follow it for a whole day, or perhaps for a week together.

The larger the pack the better ; for, in that case, the birds are easier to be seen when sitting on the pines. It seldom happens, besides, that the whole of the birds fly at once ; in which case, a person has usually an opportunity of observing the direction which is taken by one or other of them : if, on the contrary, the pack be small, the sportsman cannot so well discover the birds in the first instance ; and, in addition to this, if they all happen to take wing at the same time, when he has not

his eye upon them, he not unfrequently loses them altogether. This I have repeatedly known to happen.

One's sport, when stalking, or rather stealing, on capercali, mainly depends upon the state of the snow. If this is loose and soft under foot, and there be much of it hanging in the trees, one may usually manage to get within good rifle range of these birds; but if, on the contrary, there should be a crust on the snow, which, after rain or partial thaws, followed up by a frost, is always the case, and little or no snow in the trees, then it is far from an easy matter to approach them. At such times, from their view being less obstructed, and from hearing the crackling of the snow caused by the step of a person, they are usually exceedingly wild, and, in consequence, it is only a bird now and then that one can come in upon.

Thick and misty weather (and if it snows a little, it is all the better) is the most favourable for this sport, for the capercali then sit on pines, with their feathers muffled out like so many turkeys; and, even when disturbed, their flight is usually but for a short distance. If, on the contrary, the weather should be boisterous, or excessively cold, the capercali, as I have recently remarked, are frequently on the ground, or so shrouded in the body of the trees, that they are not readily perceptible. If the weather besides be

tempestuous, the capercali, when they take wing, often fly for a long continuance.

When the weather is cold, and the snow loose and soft, the capercali not unfrequently buries himself, as I have said, beneath its surface during the night season. Once in a while, also, I have found him in that situation in the daytime.

It requires great management to approach a pack of capercali, as, from those birds usually frequenting the more open parts of the forest, sufficient cover is not always to be found to enable the sportsman to steal upon them. It is particularly difficult to get within range of a large pack; as, let a person take what direction he will, the eye of one or other of the birds, from their being scattered among all the surrounding pines, is sure to be upon him.

In following this sport, a person should be provided with a rifle that shoots accurately at something better than a hundred paces, for it is rarely one can get within a shorter distance of these birds. If one be at all near to the capercali when one fires, and should miss him, he almost always flies; but if, on the contrary, one is at a hundred and fifty or a hundred and eighty paces distance from the bird, he will often sit until one has emptied a powder-horn. From having a very bad rifle,* I have more than once fired eight or

* Made by Collins, in Vigo Lane, and sent to me when abroad, where I had no opportunity of exchanging it.

ten shots in succession at a capercali, without his altering his position in the least. Indeed, the birds only took wing at last when my balls scraped a few feathers from their bodies.

The pursuit of the capercali is a favourite amusement of the Northern chasseurs, during the winter season. Though their rifles most commonly carry a ball no larger than a pea, these men often make extraordinary fine shots.

It is an interesting sight for a bystander to see in the distance a capercali brought down: one moment that noble bird is seen sitting on the pinnacle of a pine, and in the next, before one hears the report of the gun, he is tumbling headlong to the ground.

Jan Finne, at an earlier period of his life, was in the habit of shooting great numbers of capercali. He once pursued the same pack for a fortnight. This consisted originally of twenty-six birds; but by the expiration of that time only one was left alive. Six was the greatest number of capercali he ever killed in any one day.

Though I myself never saw more than fourteen or fifteen of those birds together during the winter season, they occasionally congregate in very considerable numbers. Indeed, a peasant near to Hjerpeliden, a Finnish hamlet situated on the Norwegian frontiers, assured me that, in his younger days, he had once known a pack to consist of upwards of two hundred.

A comrade and himself went often in chase of these birds, but though, in the course of the winter, they killed about forty of them, the pack did not seem to be materially diminished. But this was the less to be wondered at, as, from the vast tract of country the birds were driven over in that while, their numbers must necessarily have been occasionally added to by the junction of other small packs, or even straggling birds.

This man's father, whose name I forget, and who died about two years prior to the period embraced in this narrative at the very advanced age of ninety-two, was a very celebrated chasseur. In his time he killed, the son assured me, between seventy and eighty bears. He was never wounded by those brutes, though on several occasions he was in some jeopardy. In one instance, he fired at an old she-bear whilst in her den, but having only an imperfect view of her, his ball took effect in her shoulder instead of her head, the point with which he intended it to come in contact. The enraged beast in her turn now became the assailant, and made a desperate effort to get hold of the man, but he being a determined fellow, was nothing daunted; for keeping his ground, he gave her such a tremendous blow on the skull with the butt-end of his gun, that he brought her to the ground. She quickly recovered herself, however, and was again coming at him, but a second blow with the barrel of his rifle, the stock being shiver-

ed to pieces by the first concussion, fortunately finished her business.

He had once a most capital dog, which lived to extreme old age, with whose assistance he killed a great number of bears. On a particular occasion this faithful follower found and challenged to one of these beasts, that had taken up its winter-quarters in the cleft of a rock, situated in a wild and savage part of the forest, which during our wanderings was pointed out to me by the son. As the den, however, ran very far underground, all the man's endeavours to dislodge the beast were at that time unavailing, and at nightfall, therefore, he wended his way homewards; but his dog was more persevering, for he continued to watch the cavern for many hours after the departure of his master. This was on the Saturday evening. On the Monday the chasseur, together with several comrades, again repaired to the den, which, by the challenges of his dog, he found to be still tenanted by Bruin. They now resorted to a singular enough expedient, not unfrequently practised under the like circumstances in the Northern forests. They tied one of their guns to the end of a long stick, attaching at the same time a string to the trigger, which they introduced into the den; this the bear laid hold of the instant it came in contact with his carcass, and drew it, as those animals are wont to do any weapon that may be opposed to them, towards his breast, the

fatal trigger was then pulled, and the leaden messenger quickly put a period to his existence.

A rather singular occurrence once happened to the same chasseur. He had ringed a bear in the early part of the winter, but as there was then little snow, the animal was allowed to rest undisturbed for a considerable while afterwards. When the ground, however, became deeply covered with snow, he, together with several others, started off for the purpose of attacking the beast; but though the ring was of small extent, and though they had the capital dog of which I have just spoken along with them, all their endeavours to find him proved unavailing; still they were morally certain that Bruin was within the ring. In the spring of the year, therefore, when owing to partial thaws the snow had wasted considerably, and objects, of course, were more readily discernible in the forest, they again sallied out on their skidor to resume the search. In this instance fortune favoured them, for they soon succeeded in finding and killing the brute. What renders this story remarkable is, they discovered by their tracks, still visible in the snow, that on their first expedition to the ring, they must at one period actually have stood over the bear; and what was more, they had smoked their pipes, as was evidenced by the ashes they had cast from these implements, at the very spot. The snow, however, was at that period, owing to a great drift,

seven or eight feet in depth ; and the greater part of it having recently fallen, the breath of the bear had not at that time formed an aperture through it, which was of course the reason why neither man nor dog discovered his retreat. This anecdote will tend to show the extreme difficulty of getting a bear a-foot in the winter season, when the wilderness, both above and below, is deeply smothered with snow.

During our ramble, we fell in with a few black-cock, but these, like the capercali, were wild, owing to the tempestuous state of the weather ; and it was not easy to approach them.

Considerable packs of those birds, composed as well of cocks as hens, are often to be seen in the Northern forests during the winter-time. They were most commonly to be met with near to the margins of lakes, rivers, &c. where the birch usually grows in abundance ; as it is from the buds of that tree that the black-cock derives the principal part of his sustenance during that inclement period of the year.

Black-cocks are wild, as every one is aware, when they are packed ; and it is not therefore easy to approach them, unless with a rifle : with that accompaniment, very good sport may be had in the winter season. I have known nine of those birds to be thus bagged in a day.

If the snow be loose and deep, the black-cock, like the capercali, often burrows beneath its sur-

face. In general, he is entirely hidden from view, though sometimes his bill protrudes above the snow : thus he is fully protected from the weather, let the temperature be ever so severe.

In wandering through the forest, I have often come upon a pack of black-cock, thus hidden beneath the snow. When I have perhaps least expected it, one of those birds has suddenly emerged from under its covering, and flown up almost from beneath my feet : this is generally the signal for others of the pack to take wing ; for, though under the surface of the snow, they seem still to retain the faculty of hearing. In this manner, I have not unfrequently shot black-game. From certain indications found in their seats, it would seem as if those birds remain in the snow for more than a single day.

Though the black-cock is seldom in any degree perceptible when thus buried, a partial aperture at the point where he commenced excavating is to be seen in the snow. In such cases, it has not very unfrequently happened, that on a person striking the surface of the snow with a stick, in the direction he has reason to imagine the bird has taken, he has succeeded in killing it.

Many black-cock are shot in Sweden during the winter season in the following manner : in such parts as are resorted to by these birds, an artificial black-cock (bulwan), composed usually of cloth, is affixed to a tree or fence in some con-

spicuous place. In the immediate vicinity of this, the sportsman conceals himself in a little hut erected for the purpose. One or more persons now beat the surrounding country, when the birds, being disturbed, not unfrequently make towards the decoy, and thus of course fall an easy sacrifice.

In the course of our walk we fell in with the track of a lynx (*Felis Lynx*), which was no uncommon occurrence in that part of Sweden.

A difference of opinion exists in Scandinavia as to whether there is one or more kinds of lynx in that peninsula. Mr. Nilsson thinks there are two varieties, which he designates by the respective appellations of the Wolf Lynx (*Warg-lo*) and the Cat Lynx (*Katt-lo*). He draws this conclusion from the diversity of habits, as well as colour, observable in these animals; but he at the same time admits that he has hitherto been unable to make sufficient anatomical experiments to speak very decidedly upon the subject. Others again imagine there is only one species, and that the difference of size, colour, &c. is owing to their respective ages. Both Mr. Falk and Mr. Grieff are of that way of thinking. The latter, when speaking of the lynx, says, "I once fell in with two of the young of those animals, when they were only a few days old, which I kept in a wooden cage. One of them grew large, and got a handsome white and black spot-

ted skin ; but the other, notwithstanding it had the same feeding, was less, and the skin was reddish. I have always believed there was only one sort of lynx, and this fact has confirmed me still more in that opinion. Although there is only one kind of wolf with us, they are still very different in colour during the winter season. It is the same with the lynx."

As considerable doubts exist as to there being two kinds of lynx in Scandinavia, it is useless speaking more at large of the supposed varieties. I shall content myself, therefore, with a very general description of that animal, whose leading characteristics, whether constituting one or more species, are at all events the same.

He measures about four feet from the nose to the insertion of his tail;* the latter is eight or nine inches long. In outward appearance he is not very dissimilar to the cat, excepting that he is much larger, has longer legs, and a shorter tail. It is difficult to describe his colour, as it varies much according to his age, as well as to the season. In summer, reddish-brown predominates ; in winter his fur is of a grayish cast. His skin is marked with dark spots, but in some these are

* Captain Brooke speaks of having seen skins of the lynx, in either Norway or Lapland, five feet in length, exclusive of the tail ; but the length of the skin, as I have said when speaking of the bear, is no criterion of the size of the animal, it often being elongated by the peasants in a most preposterous manner.

hardly perceptible : they are more prominent in the male than in the female. His ears are pointed, erect, and about three inches in length, and the ends of them are tufted with long black hair, by which these animals are peculiarly distinguished. His legs and feet are very thick and strong ; his eyes, which are yellow, are proverbially piercing ; in the dark they shine like balls of fire. He is said to be very long-lived. His skin is valuable. In Sweden it is worth near a pound sterling.

The lynx is to be found in some abundance in all the more deeply-wooded districts of Scandinavia. They are usually to be met with singly, or at most in pairs ; unless it be perhaps that the mother is followed by her cubs. They generally confine themselves to the wildest recesses of the forest, and are rarely to be seen in the vicinity of inhabited places.

The period of gestation with the lynx is from eight to nine weeks ; the female brings forth two or three young about the beginning of May : this is either in the cavity of a rock, or in other sheltered situations. It is said the mother gives her whelps living animals, the better to initiate them in the art of killing their victims.

The lynx is a most destructive beast. He kills the young of elk, deer, rein-deer, roebuck, hares, &c. ; and also the capercali, black-cock, and other birds common to the Northern forests. He de-

stroys, likewise, the smaller domestic animals, such as sheep, goats, calves, &c. When he gets among a flock of sheep or goats, it is said, that if he be unmolested, he slaughters the whole of them. He has been known to attack and kill even a horse. The lynx, it is asserted, never touches carrion, or putrid flesh.

A full-grown lynx is about as large as a wolf. He is little dangerous to the human race. I never heard of his attacking a person, unless molested in the first instance. If he be wounded, however, he will sometimes turn upon his antagonist; indeed, more than one instance has come to my knowledge, that, when thus circumstanced, he has severely lacerated his assailant.

It is not difficult to kill the lynx with the assistance of a good dog; for, if closely pursued, the animal usually takes refuge in a tree, which he ascends with the agility of a cat. In that situation, it is of course easy for the sportsman to destroy him. If the dogs take the lynx by surprise, and he is unable to shelter himself either in a tree, or in the cleft of a rock, it is said he throws himself on to his back, and, with his claws and teeth, defends himself desperately against his foes.

The *chasse* of the lynx is attended with little or no danger. From the Northern forests producing larger and better game, I hardly ever thought it worth my while to pursue those animals. I have

known people, however, who have devoted a good deal of time to the purpose, whose labours have been rewarded with proportionate success. A man that I met with in Norrland told me he usually killed six or eight lynxes in the course of the winter, and that, during one particular season, he destroyed no less than thirteen of these animals.

Besides the lynx, I believe, there is no other animal of the feline race, of the large kind at least, to be found in Scandinavia. Wild cats, which are common to most countries in Europe, are not to be met with, Mr. Nilsson says, in that part of the world. It is true that, once now and then, one finds a cat at large in the forest; but these, I have reason to think, have escaped at some former period from the habitations of men. Mr. Greiff relates the following rather singular story regarding the healing powers of a cat:—“In general, sportsmen entertain a dislike to cats, because they destroy much game; but circumstances likewise occur, which remind mortals that every thing is good which God has created. For example: it happened that a young sportsman of fifteen years old, whom I still know very well, had got a dreadful pain in his left knee, and, by a contraction of the sinews, was forced to use crutches; and the doctors had given their sentence that this would be his fate through life. Some one had heard the officers who were in the

Pomeranian war of 1757, relate, that soldiers who from fatigue had got pains in the sinews, had used dog and calf-skins just taken off and warm, which had given them ease ; an idea was therefore started, that the cat, which is of a still warmer nature, would be more serviceable, especially if the whole cat was used. The doctors' hard sentence, and the intolerable pain, determined him to make every possible attempt to obtain a cure or alleviation. The patient therefore removed out into a tent, had a cat's head cut off, ripped open the body, and, with intestines and all, laid it round his knee, and fastened it with several handkerchiefs. When it had remained for twenty-four hours, the knee got more supple ; the next day, the leg could be stretched out altogether, and a hole broke out of itself, in the dreadful swelling, from which much matter was discharged. The third day the cat was removed. The patient dressed himself, and went, without stick or crutch, up to his parents and some strangers, who with joy beheld the miracle. All the pores on which the cat lay appeared to have opened, and the cat had nearly putrefied, so that others could with difficulty approach the tent. The cure was effected in 1772. The old patient is still alive, and has, at seventy years of age, and after terrible fatigues, both as a soldier and a sportsman, never had the smallest pain in that knee."

To proceed.—On the succeeding morning, Friday, 11th of January, Elg and myself were off, long before daylight, in a sledge, for the residence of a peasant, situated in the wilds of the forest, at about seven miles to the eastward of Brunberg. We took this journey, in consequence of the man having asserted that he had seen such marks in the forest, during the preceding autumn, as rendered it very probable that a bear might be lying in the vicinity.

But on reaching the peasant's dwelling, we found that the indications he spoke of were still at some five or six miles' distance, and to the eastward of a noble lake called the Qvin, where, after taking some refreshment, we forthwith proceeded.

We had not the most agreeable time of it, for it was blowing a very hard gale of wind, and the snow was falling thickly the whole of the day. This, nevertheless, would have been a trifling evil, had we had a bear on foot, or had there been even a probability of our rousing one of those animals; but when we came to the spot of which the man had spoken, we found that the marks which he had seen, instead of being made by a bear, were merely those of a badger. These animals, which are too well known in England to need a description, are pretty numerous in the middle and southern parts of Scandinavia. Mr. Nilsson asserts, though in opposition to the opi-

nion generally entertained by naturalists, that they are carnivorous, as well as granivorous ; that they feed alike on roots, berries, and other vegetable matter, as on flesh. Mr. Greiff, on the contrary, believes the badger is not carnivorous, and he alleges as a reason, that within the multitude of their dens which he has seen, he had never met with a vestige of any animal substance. He thinks, therefore, that the Professor has formed an erroneous opinion on the subject, "in consequence of deserted badger's dens having subsequently been taken possession of by foxes, or *vice versâ*, in which case the bones of hares, and feathers of birds have naturally been found."

The female is said to carry her young ten or twelve weeks, and to bring forth from three to five, in February or March. These are at first blind. If taken young, the badger may be tamed. They are said to keep a house free of rats, but when thus domesticated, they are reported occasionally to seize on poultry, and even on small pigs.

Like the bear, the badger treads on the whole heel whilst walking, which brings his stomach very near to the ground.

The badger does not leave his den, in which there are usually several apartments, after the end of November ; and here, embedded in large quantities of moss, &c. which he has collected for the purpose, he passes the winter months in a state

of constant repose. In all this while he does not take the least nourishment. When he first lies down, however, he is in a state of great obesity, wisely ordered by Nature, to enable him to support his long abstinence. It is said, in Scandinavia, that the badger, like the bear, derives nourishment by extracting the fat externally from his own body. But this of course must be fabulous.

“The badger hunt,” Mr. Greiff remarks, “is not the pleasantest amusement. A sportsman who has good dogs ought, by all means, to prevent them from coming into contact with those animals, and acquiring the habit of fighting with them; for, besides the dogs getting injured by bites, they get entangled in the clefts of the rocks, and are lost. A dog that is quick enough to avoid the very sharp teeth of the badger, can, by his constant barking, constrain him to shift his quarters, and by this means afford the sportsman an opportunity of a shot at him. It likewise may happen that, with a hook, you can draw him out of his hole. Several large dogs, when they meet a badger out in the fields, can with difficulty kill him; for he is so soft and fat, that their teeth do not go through his blubber: his cutting bite besides frightens the dogs. The common method of catching him is to watch for him in the summer evenings, after sunset, when he sometimes may be found away from his hole, in meadows

or corn-fields, and also in gardens, and then knock him on the head with a bludgeon.

“ His fat is incomparable for rubbing into leather ; it is also good in lamps. Its flesh is very eatable, when parboiled in hay-seed water, or still better in salt-water, and afterwards roasted and left to cool, and used for luncheon ; it has then been looked upon by judges as a real delicacy ; but it must be the flesh of young badgers.” Mr. Greiff is not far from the mark in pronouncing the flesh of the badger to be very eatable. I remember partaking of the ham of one of those animals in the wilds of Ireland, which I thought excellent.

“ The skin,” that author goes on to say, “ is used for gun-cases, game-bags, and to cover trunks ; and the best shaving-brushes are made from its hair. In the common gins, or snares, the badger seldom permits himself to be taken ; but when there is only one entrance, or exit, to his den, he is then easily caught by a sort of trap which is used for rats, it being well understood that it is large enough to hold him.* The trap is made with four deals : at the farthest end, or that which is turned outwards, is an iron grate to give daylight ; at the other end, which is placed quite close into the entrance of the cleft or den, a wooden door is affixed, which, when the badger has entered, falls, and thus encloses him. The

* A truism that is little likely to be called in question.

trap must be surrounded with stone or bricks, to prevent its being moved, or to allow the badger making his escape.

Though we have derived many of our customs from our Scandinavian progenitors, it is to be hoped the very barbarous one of badger-baiting was not among the number; at least I have no idea that it is adopted in that peninsula at the present day.

Though we had been thus disappointed in the object of our journey, we, notwithstanding, continued to beat the surrounding forest in the hope of finding a bear; but, though we reconnoitred more than one den, where those animals had in olden times passed the winter, our search proved unsuccessful. From the extreme scarcity of bears, indeed, in the Scandinavian forests, unless they be previously ringed, it is a matter of no ordinary difficulty to get those beasts on foot.

At nightfall we returned to our sledge; when, after taking some refreshment, we set off, during a very heavy storm, from Brunberg; but we had an uncomfortable ride of it, for the snow was driving in our faces all the way. The storm continued with unabated violence during the whole of the night.

As we could not obtain intelligence of other bears in this part of the country, or succeed in getting one of those animals on foot ourselves, we thought we might as well face homewards, and

see after the beast which had escaped us some days before, near to Sälje.

On the following morning, therefore, Saturday the 12th of January, we bade adieu to Brunberg, and directed our course to the southward; but it was not possible to make very rapid progress, as the track was now entirely blocked up with the snow which had fallen during the preceding night.

This being the case, I directed the driver to make the best of his way with the sledge to Moss-sjön, when Elg and myself, taking the dogs along with us, struck into the forest, in hopes of finding a bear. As usual, however, our search proved unsuccessful; and, indeed, with the exception of a single capercali, we did not see another head of game.

At nightfall we again fell in with our peasant, when we jogged on together to Tönnet; here we took some refreshment, and then set off for Lapp-cottage; but owing to the badness of the track, and the darkness of the night, which obliged us to proceed with great caution along the river, together with delays in procuring horses, we did not get home until between one and two o'clock on the following morning.

CHAPTER XII.

Journey to Näs.—English Dogs incapable of withstanding the rigours of a Northern Winter.—Death of the Sälje Bear; finding a cub in her womb.—Dog fondling with Cubs.—Manner of rearing young Bears; their playfulness.

ON the following morning, we had sixteen degrees of cold at sunrise, and twenty-five in the evening.

On the succeeding day, Monday the 14th of January, I took Elg and the dogs along with me, and drove in my sledge some sixteen or eighteen miles to the eastward, to search for a bear, of which we had received such intelligence as led us to imagine we might not improbably meet with the animal; but our little expedition proved unsuccessful; for, though we fell in with the spot where one of those beasts had passed a previous winter, we were not fortunate enough to find him.

The weather had now become rather severe; for, when we started at six o'clock in the morn-

ing, there were thirty degrees of cold; and on our return, at eight in the evening, the quicksilver was six degrees below zero.

On the afternoon of the following day, Elg and myself set out in my sledge for Näs, for the purpose of seeing after the bear that had so unfortunately escaped us ten days before, near to Sälje. The former hamlet was situated at about ten miles to the northward of Lapp-cottage, and was the nearest habitable point to where the beast was then supposed to be encircled.

The track was now in fair order; and as we had a good horse, we soon reached our destination. Here I was fortunate enough to meet with a snug and clean room; and as I had some of my own bedding along with me, I found myself very comfortable.

The evening was inclement. On exposing a thermometer to the open air, the quicksilver fell to eighteen degrees below zero.

The peasant who had seen after the bear we were about to attack during our absence at Brunberg resided at Näs. We were glad to learn from him that, in that while, he had gone round the ring almost daily, and that he had every reason to believe the animal was still safe within it. Elg and myself, however, entertained some doubts whether the beast had ever been really encircled, as, from the snow which fell so immediately after

we had roused him, it was not improbable that his tracks might have been obliterated, and that, in consequence, he had gone off unperceived.

At two hours before sunrise on the succeeding morning, Wednesday the 16th of January, Elg and myself, together with the peasant of whom I have just spoken, were off on foot for the ring, which was at about six miles to the N. E. of Näs. But before starting we said nothing regarding our intention, other than that we were going to see that the ring was secure; for, in the event of a second failure, we did not wish again to be laughed at.

At this time, the quicksilver was twenty-five degrees below zero; but though I was only habited in my usual clothes, with the exception of an additional waistcoat, from walking pretty fast, I experienced little inconvenience. From not sufficiently covering my ears, however, I got one of them slightly frostbitten.

Paijas was the only dog we had along with us on this occasion, but he suffered sadly from the cold. This was partly owing to his hair having become thin and ragged, in consequence of his advanced age: none of the native dogs, indeed, even if in their full vigour, are altogether proof against the weather, if it be unusually severe. Their feet seem to be the most affected; for I have many times seen them hold up their legs from the snow, and cry out most pitiously. This

being the case with animals whom Nature has provided with extremely warm jackets, it may be imagined how little able some of our thin-coated English dogs would be to face the rigours of a Northern winter.

I saw this exemplified in two instances. One was an English blood-hound, which Mr. Otway Cave, the Member for Leicester, was so kind as to present to me; the other was a bull-dog that I procured from home. Both of these dogs would, doubtless, have answered my purpose exceedingly well; but they could not exist in the forest if the quicksilver happened to be a few degrees below zero. On one occasion, indeed, the bull-dog became so benumbed with the cold, that his limbs absolutely stiffened; when, to save his life, I was obliged to cause one of my people, after putting him into a bag, to carry him a distance of some ten miles, to a habitable part of the country.

As it was not full daylight when we reached the vicinity of the ring, we halted, and got up a good fire. This the poor dog seemed most thoroughly to enjoy; to ourselves, likewise, it was far from uncomfortable. Here we took some refreshment, which we needed, as we had breakfasted very slenderly prior to leaving Näs.

This was a little before sunrise, at which period the cold is generally the most intense. Happening to have a thermometer along with me, an ac-

companionment I was seldom without in the forest, I fastened it to a tree, when the quicksilver presently fell to twenty-eight degrees below zero, or sixty degrees beneath the point of congelation.

Though I had several thermometers, and though I used to pay some attention to the state of the weather, particularly in the winter-time, I was incapable, from circumstances, of keeping such accurate accounts as to be able to give any thing like the mean temperature of that part of Scandinavia. This I regret, as the information might have been interesting to many.

After toasting ourselves for upwards of half an hour before our watch-fire, by which time the sun had risen in all his majesty, we again set forward on the work of death. At this season of the year, however, that glorious luminary emitted little warmth, even in the middle of the day; indeed, I once remember exposing my thermometer on the northern side of a hill, at twelve o'clock at noon, the sun shining bright at the time, when the quicksilver fell twelve degrees below zero.

The ring, as I have said, was about six miles in circumference; but as, from previous inquiries, we had a pretty good knowledge of the most likely thickets, we of course determined on beating these first and foremost.

In this instance, I had my double gun, and Elg carried my rifle; but I gave him strict injunction,

on this as on similar occasions, never to fire unless an accident happened to myself. There were now some few inches of snow upon the ground ; but as it was loose, walking was quite easy. The trees were loaded with snow ; and it may therefore well be believed, I did not neglect the leather, &c. which I was in the habit of carrying for the better protection of my locks.

I now directed Elg to keep at six or eight paces to the left of me ; and our peasant, who was only armed with an axe, to lead Paijas at about one hundred paces in our rear. But I ordered him to slip the dog from his couplings, the instant he should hear a shot, or a whistle, the preconcerted signal. This was a necessary precaution, as, in the event of our rousing the bear, and his attacking us, Paijas, by diverting his attention, would have been of inestimable value.

These preliminaries being arranged, we advanced into the ring, and, with the utmost silence and caution, proceeded to thread the most tangled brakes that were to be found within it. We had far from an agreeable time of it ; for, independently of the snow that was coming down upon us from the trees, at almost every step we took, in large masses, we felt the cold to some extent, now that we were necessarily proceeding at a snail's pace.

For upwards of two hours, our search proved unsuccessful. At last, however, in a very close

thicket, and when stooping down and peering under the surrounding trees, (for, when erect, my view was very circumscribed,) my eye caught a suspicious-looking object at some paces in advance of me. This I presently made out to be the bear, coiled up like a dog, who was lying in his korg, or lair, at the foot of a large pine, and apparently fast asleep. I now hardly lost a second in divesting myself of my gloves; when, running close alongside of the beast, I shot him through the head: his death, indeed, was so instantaneous, that he never moved in the slightest degree from the position in which he was previously lying.

Elg, who was within a few paces of me when I first discovered the bear, but who, from the thickness of the cover, had neither seen the animal nor noticed my movements, on hearing the shot, quickly came up. Paijas also, whom the peasant had now loosed from his leash, made his appearance at the scene of action, where, for a while, he made the forest ring again with his savage yells; but fortunately, I stood in no need of assistance.

This system of stealing in upon and attacking bears at close quarters, though perhaps not commonly adopted in Scandinavia, I hold to be the most fatal method of destroying those animals; if practicable, indeed, I invariably adopted it. At long range, it is true, a man may hit a bear in some part or other of his body; but if the muz-

zle of his gun be placed immediately near to the beast, he ought not to fail (which I have done, by the by,) of putting his ball in the right place.

Numbers, on these occasions, if the parties can be fully depended upon—for otherwise the matter is worse—may certainly be some security, as far as one's personal safety is concerned ; but then, again, there is usually more noise and confusion, and, consequently, much less chance of being able to approach near to the bear.

The danger, however, of thus singly coming so immediately in contact with these ferocious brutes is, it must be admitted, considerable ; for, when smothered with snow both above and below, as is generally the case in the winter-time, a miss-fire, which is likely enough to happen, or an ill-directed shot, may cost a man a dreadful mauling, or perhaps his life. To tell the truth, indeed, I never went on these expeditions without experiencing something of what the lawyers call "bodily fear." This perhaps was little to be wondered at, as, according to Mr. Falk, few people's nerves are altogether steady on similar occasions.

We now discovered that it was a she-bear that we had slaughtered ; and that along with her, in her den, were three cubs, which had apparently been just ushered into the world. Though the mother was an immense brute, these were little, if any thing, larger than puppies of the like age. Instead, therefore, of one bear, which

had escaped from near to Sälje, and, as we then thought, altogether, we now bagged four of these animals.

As I was anxious, if possible, to rear the cubs, I wrapped them up in the warmest manner I was able, and then despatched our peasant with them to Sälje; I ordered him, at the same time, to procure a horse and sledge at that place, that we might convey the old bear from the forest.

During his absence, Elg and myself, rather than remain idle, beat several of the surrounding brakes, in the hopes of finding another bear; but our exertions to effect that object proved altogether unsuccessful.

About two o'clock in the afternoon, therefore, being desirous to get the cubs to Lapp-cottage as soon as possible, I left Elg to wait for the peasant, whom we almost momentarily expected with a sledge, and made the best of my way through the forest to Näs.

On my arrival at this hamlet, I found the people not a little gratified at the successful termination of our expedition. This might well be the case, as the bear we had fortunately succeeded in killing was, as I have said, supposed to have committed many ravages in that part of the country.

After taking some refreshment, and packing the cubs in the warmest possible manner in my sledge, I got into that vehicle, and made the best

of my way to Lapp-cottage; where I arrived at about eight o'clock in the evening, and where Elg also made his appearance with the old bear, three or four hours afterwards.

Some seven or eight days prior to the period of which I speak, my Lapland dog, Brunette, had whelps; when, not being desirous of rearing them, I caused the whole litter to be destroyed as soon as they were born: this might seem cruel; but by taking necessary precautions, the mother was as well as ever again in the course of a few days. At this time, therefore, her milk had gone up, and her teats, in consequence, were altogether dry.

On the arrival of the young bears, however, and on hearing their cries, Brunette thought that they were her own whelps, and came fondling and licking them in the most affectionate manner. I would now have given almost any thing had the poor creature not been deprived of her milk, as I am nearly certain she would have suckled the cubs; but as this was not the case, and as there was nothing better to be done, I caused a warm bed to be made up, and put the cubs along with her. Here she lay and nestled with them for many days.

During this period, we fed the young bears with a little milk, which we introduced into their mouths either with a tea-spoon, or the assistance of the fingers. At one time, I thought they

would have lived ; but at length they all gradually pined away, and died. One of them survived for the space of sixteen days. Had Brunette had her milk at this time, unless there might be something in the nature of it detrimental to the constitution of the cubs, I have not the least doubt but she would have reared the whole of them.

Though I unfortunately lost these young bears, I succeeded, as I have said, in rearing two others at an after period. Elg and myself were wandering quite alone in the forest, when we fell in with and shot their mother. The cubs were then, we had reason to suppose, several weeks old ; but they were quite small, so much so, that I was enabled to tie them both in my pocket-handkerchief, and thus to convey them from the forest.

There was no difficulty in rearing these, as they fed greedily upon sweet milk, with which we supplied them three or four times in the course of twenty-four hours. It was necessary to give them this liquid in a warm state, or otherwise they would not touch it. Subsequently, we introduced meal into their mess ; and at an after period we fed them chiefly on that substance. They would devour, however, almost every thing we gave them,—fish, flesh, or fowl.

They were perfectly tame, when I saw them in Scandinavia a few weeks ago ; and were often at large with my dogs. They were most amusing fellows, though becoming rather too formidable

for playthings. They could climb with great facility ; indeed, every now and then, if my windows happened to be open, they would ascend the side of the house, and thus get access to my room.

Bears are not unfrequently domesticated in Wermeland. I heard of one that was so tame, that his master, a peasant, used occasionally to cause him to stand at the back of his sledge, when on a journey ; but the beast kept so good a balance, that it was next to impossible to upset him. When the vehicle went on one side, Bruin threw his weight the other way, and *vice versa*. One day, however, the peasant amused himself by driving over the very worst ground he could find, with the intention, if possible, of throwing the bear off his equilibrium ; by which, at last, the animal got so irritated, that he fetched his master, who was in advance of him, a tremendous thump on the shoulder with his paw. This frightened the man so much, that he caused the brute to be killed immediately.

If bears, in a state of domestication, be allowed to remain in a quiet and secluded place, they pass the winter months in a torpid state, like their fraternity who are at large in the forest. This, Mr. Falk assured me, was the case with a bear that was for several years in his possession.

On the following day, we skinned and dissected the old bear ; when, on opening her, we found

another cub ; which, had we not destroyed the mother, would doubtless by that time have made its entry into the world. Thus the idle story told by more than one naturalist — of female bears never having been found with cubs in their wombs, was, as I have elsewhere remarked, set at nought.

Though it is true that a bear is not often killed under the above circumstances, cases of this kind do occur. Jan Finne met with one instance ; and the like was the case with Svensson ; the latter, indeed, assured me, that he had not only shot a she-bear with cubs in her womb, but he had known three other instances where parturition took place during the pursuit ; the chase, however, on these occasions, had been continued from one to three weeks.

CHAPTER XIII.

Wolf-shooting.—Anecdotes.—Expedients to intimidate
Wolves.

As usually happens when the weather is severe, the wolves now became rather troublesome ; and I heard of their committing many depredations in different parts of the surrounding country : for this reason, I went on one or two little expeditions, under the idea that I might be enabled to destroy some of those voracious animals.

Wolves are very partial to a pig. My plan of proceeding, therefore, was this : I caused one of these animals, of a small size, to be sewed up in a sack, with the exception of his snout ; and I then placed him in my sledge. To the back of this vehicle I fastened a rope of about fifty feet in length, to the extreme end of which was attached a small bundle of straw, covered with a black sheepskin ; this, when the sledge was in motion, dangled about in such a manner as to be a good representation of the pig. Thus prepared, I drove in the night-time through such districts

as were known to be frequented by wolves. To attract these animals towards us, we kept occasionally pinching the poor pig, who, not liking this treatment, made the forest ring again with his squeaks.

This plan of shooting wolves with the assistance of a pig is not very unfrequently resorted to in Scandinavia, when the weather is severe. If those dangerous animals happen to hear the cries of the pig, it is said they almost always approach immediately near to the sledge, when it is not, of course, difficult to kill them.

All my expeditions, however, proved unsuccessful; for, owing to the wandering habits of the wolves, I was never able to fall in with them. On some of these occasions I have suffered a good deal from cold; as, from the necessity that existed of being always ready for action, it did not answer to be hampered with too much clothing. My poor pig, I remember, had once his ears so hard frozen, that they might almost have been broken off in the same manner as so much glass.

I once tried the above plan near to the north-western shores of the Wenern, in a district called Näs, where a large drove of wolves had recently committed great devastation; but though I traversed the country, and inlets of the Wenern itself, which were then frozen over, for nearly

two whole nights, I was not fortunate enough to meet with these marauders.

About a week prior to this time a peasant, on his return home from Ämäl one evening, tied his horse up to his door whilst he carried the harness within the house. At this moment, a number of wolves made their appearance, when the frightened animal broke his bridle, and ran off at the top of his speed ; but the wolves gave chase to the horse, and soon succeeded in coming up with him in the forest, when they quickly destroyed him.

During my excursion, I visited the spot where the poor animal met his doom, but, with the exception of a bone or two that were strewed about, not a vestige of the carcase was to be seen ; the wolves having by this time devoured the whole of it. There was some blood on the snow, which was trodden down in the vicinity, in the same manner as if it had been gone over by a flock of sheep.

Though I was generally quite alone, with the exception of my driver, during these expeditions, I do not apprehend I ran much personal risk ; the greatest danger was from the horse proving unsteady, in the event of the wolves making their appearance. In that case, the sledge would not improbably have been overturned, when I, in consequence, might have been left to my fate. From the wolves themselves, under other cir-

cumstances, I entertained little apprehension, as I was usually armed with a good cutlass, and more than one gun.

It is said, that people have incurred some jeopardy when on these expeditions. The following anecdote was related to me by Mr. Garberg, at Gefle. Of the truth of the story, which occurred near to that place, that gentleman did not seem to entertain a doubt.

About twenty years ago, during a very severe winter, and when there were known to be many wolves roaming about the country, a Captain Nordenalder, together with several companions, started off on an excursion similar to those I have been describing.

The party were provided with a large sledge, such as are used in Sweden to convey coke to the furnaces, a pig, and an ample supply of guns, ammunition, &c. They drove on to a great piece of water, which was then frozen over, in the vicinity of Forsbacka, and at no great distance from the town of Gefle. Here they began to pinch the ears, &c. of the pig, who of course squeaked out tremendously.

This, as they anticipated, soon drew a multitude of famished wolves about their sledge. When these had approached within range, the party opened a fire upon them, and destroyed or mutilated several of the number. All the animals that were either killed or wounded were

quickly torn to pieces and devoured by their companions. This, as I have observed, is said invariably to be the case, if there be many congregated together.

The blood with which the ravenous beasts had now glutted themselves, instead of satiating their hunger, only served to make them more savage and ferocious than before ; for, in spite of the fire kept up by the party, they advanced close to the sledge, with the apparent intention of making an instant attack. To preserve their lives, therefore, the Captain and his friends threw the pig on to the ice ; this, which was quickly devoured by the wolves, had the effect, for the moment, of diverting their fury to another object.

Whilst this was going forward, the horse, driven to desperation by the near approach of the ferocious animals, struggled and plunged so violently, that he broke the shafts to pieces : being thus disengaged from the vehicle, the poor animal galloped off, and, as the story goes, succeeded in making good his escape.

When the pig was devoured, which was probably hardly the work of a minute, the wolves again threatened to attack the party ; and as the destruction of a few out of so immense a drove as was then assembled, only served to render the survivors more blood-thirsty, the Captain and his friends now turned their sledge bottom up, and thus took refuge beneath its friendly shelter.

In this situation, it is said, they remained for many hours, the wolves in that while making repeated attempts to get at them, by tearing the sledge with their teeth ; but at length assistance arrived, and they were then, to their great joy, relieved from their most perilous situation.

Captain Eurenus, when he was quite a boy, in company with a brother who was younger than himself, once went on a similar expedition to those of which I have been speaking. It was in the depth of winter, the cold at the time being very severe, when these striplings proceeded in their sledge to an inlet of the Wenern, which was then sheeted with ice, and which was known to be much frequented by wolves. They had a pig along with them, as usual, who, by the application of a corking-pin, they soon caused to open his pipes in such a manner that he might have been heard at two or three miles distance. These cries soon attracted the wolves to the spot : when they had approached to within a short distance of the sledge, Captain Eurenus discharged his piece, and severely wounded, as he supposed, one of the number. The report of the gun, however, caused the horse to take fright, when capsizing the sledge and smashing the shafts to pieces, he went off at full gallop, with the latter dangling at his heels.

Captain Eurenus and his brother were now in

a rather awkward predicament : they had, besides, lost their ammunition, and had only one loaded gun left. Leaving the pig in the sledge to its fate, they therefore faced towards their home, from which they were distant several miles, at their best pace. In this while, as it may be supposed, they cast many an anxious look behind, to see if the wolves were in pursuit ; but their fears were at length relieved ; for, after proceeding some way, they met their father and a posse of people advancing to their assistance. These had seen the horse come galloping home with the broken shafts ; when, knowing the nature of the service on which Captain Eurenus and his brother had been engaged, as well as the direction these had taken, they lost no time in hastening towards the spot. The meeting was a joyful one ; the father being not a little delighted thus to find his sons in safety.

The whole party then repaired to the scene of action : here they found the pig had been taken from the sledge and devoured. This also seemed to have been the fate of a wolf,—the same, it was supposed, that Captain Eurenus fired at ; for some pieces of skin, and bones, of one of those ferocious animals, were found near to the spot.

During severe weather, when wolves are famishing with hunger, their natural timidity, as I have said, forsakes them, and they then oftentimes conduct their attacks in the most daring

manner. Among several instances of the kind which have come to my knowledge, I select the following.

In the depth of a hard winter, many years ago, Captain Eurenus and a friend were one evening traversing the Wenern lake, which was then firmly frozen over ; this was at no great distance from the town of Wenersborg, situated, as I have remarked, at the southern extremity of that noble expanse of water. The companions were in a sledge, and jogging quietly along, when suddenly their horse pulled up, and became violently alarmed and agitated. For a while they were at a loss to divine the reason why the animal should be so affrighted, but on looking a-head they discovered a drove of twelve or fourteen wolves ; these presently approached to within a very short distance of their vehicle, and seemed to threaten them with an immediate attack. Very unfortunately, they had no gun along with them on this occasion ; but both were armed with good swords. Captain Eurenus therefore took the reins, whilst his friend jumping out of the sledge, posted himself, sabre in hand, immediately in front of the horse ; by these means their ferocious assailants were kept at bay. Finding himself thus protected, the poor animal again moved forward.

The man now kept advancing a pace or two a-head of the horse, brandishing his sword all the while to drive off the wolves ; these were never

more than a very short distance from him, and often so near, that he could almost touch them with the point of his weapon.

In this manner, Captain Eurenus and his companion proceeded for five or six miles, and until they reached the very outskirts of the town of Wenersborg, when the wolves thought it prudent to beat a retreat.

Captain Eurenus stated, that during all this while, they did not feel much alarmed for their personal safety, as they depended on their trusty swords to get them out of the scrape, in the event of its coming to a personal conflict with the wolves. For the life of the horse, however, they entertained great apprehension. Indeed, Captain Eurenus felt assured, that, if he had not had a companion in the sledge on this occasion, even if his own existence had not been sacrificed, the poor animal would most undoubtedly have been destroyed by those pernicious beasts. He said, moreover, that the wolves never attempted to get into the rear of the sledge, but always kept in advance of it. This, if it be practicable, is usually the case with those animals; and is supposed to be owing to their dread of falling into an ambuscade.

Some fifty years ago, and when quite a boy, Captain Eurenus was one starlight and very cold night returning from a dance in the vicinity of Wenersborg. It was Christmas-time, and there

were fifteen or sixteen sledges in company : most of the horses were provided with such bells as those of which I have spoken. In the middle of the cavalcade was a sledge occupied by a lady ; at the back of which, as is frequently the case, sat the servant, who was driving ; whilst on a bear-skin, which covered her feet, a favourite lap-dog was reposing. In passing through a wood, however, and in spite of the jingling of the bells, &c. a large wolf suddenly sprang from a thicket, when, seizing the poor dog, he leaped over the sledge, and was out of sight in a thick brake on the opposite side of the wood in the course of a few seconds.

A somewhat similar anecdote to the above was related to me by Lieutenant Oldenburg.

Two of his friends, whose names I forget, when on a journey in the winter-time, were accompanied by a favourite dog, which was following immediately in the rear of the sledge. All of a sudden, two famished wolves dashed at the dog, who, to save himself, ran to the side of the vehicle, and jumped over the shafts between the horse and the body of the carriage. The wolves, nothing deterred, had the audacity to take a similar leap ; when, as ill-luck would have it, they got hold of the poor animal. But the dog was large and powerful, and his neck, besides, was armed with one of those formidable-spiked collars so common to be seen in

Sweden. From these causes, he was enabled to escape from the fangs of his assailants, when he at once sprang into the sledge, as if to claim protection from his masters.

Here, however, the wolves were afraid to pursue him, though for a considerable distance they still continued to follow the vehicle. On this occasion, both of Lieutenant O.'s friends were unarmed, and, in consequence, the beasts escaped with impunity.

Another anecdote, of a rather curious nature, was told me by an acquaintance of mine in Wermeland.

A peasant was one day crossing a large lake in his sledge, when he was attacked by a drove of wolves. This frightened the horse so much, that he went off at full speed. There was at this time a loose rope hanging from the back of the vehicle, that had been used for binding hay, or other purposes : to the end of this a noose happened to be attached. Though this was not intended to catch a wolf, it fortunately effected that desirable object ; for one of the ferocious animals getting his feet entangled within it, he was presently destroyed, owing to the pace at which the horse was proceeding.

The poor peasant at last reached a place of safety. Though he had been dreadfully frightened during the chase, he not only found himself much sooner at the end of his journey than he had ex-

pected, but richer by the booty he had thus unexpectedly obtained. The skin of a wolf, in Sweden, is worth, at this time, about fifteen rix-dollars, or as many shillings.

The following circumstance, showing the savage nature of the wolf, and interesting in more than one point of view, was related to me by a gentleman of rank attached to the embassy at St. Petersburg : it occurred in Russia some few years ago.

A woman, accompanied by three of her children, were one day in a sledge, when they were pursued by a number of wolves. On this, she put the horse into a gallop, and drove towards her home, from which she was not far distant, with all possible speed. All, however, would not avail, for the ferocious animals gained upon her, and, at last, were on the point of rushing on the sledge. For the preservation of her own life and that of the remaining children, the poor frantic creature now took one of her babes, and cast it a prey to her blood-thirsty pursuers. This stopped their career for a moment ; but, after devouring the little innocent, they renewed the pursuit, and a second time came up with the vehicle. The mother, driven to desperation, resorted to the same horrible expedient, and threw her ferocious assailants another of her offspring. To cut short this melancholy story, her third child was sacrificed in a similar manner.

Soon after this, the wretched being, whose feelings may more easily be conceived than described, reached her home in safety. Here she related what had happened, and endeavoured to palliate her own conduct, by describing the dreadful alternative to which she had been reduced. A peasant, however, who was among the bystanders, and heard the recital, took up an axe, and with one blow cleft her skull in two; saying, at the same time that a mother who could thus sacrifice her children for the preservation of her own life, was no longer fit to live.

This man was committed to prison, but the Emperor subsequently gave him a pardon.

This gentleman related to me another curious circumstance regarding wolves: it happened at no great distance from St. Petersburg, only two years previously.

A peasant, when one day in his sledge, was pursued by eleven of those ferocious animals: at this time he was only about two miles from home, towards which he urged his horse at the very top of his speed. At the entrance to his residence was a gate, which happened to be closed at the time, but the horse dashed this open, and thus himself and his master found refuge within the court-yard.

They were followed, however, by nine out of the eleven wolves; but, very fortunately, at the instant these had entered the enclosure, the gate

swung back on its hinges, and thus they were caught as in a trap. From being the most voracious of animals, the nature of these beasts, now that they found escape impossible, became completely changed : so far, indeed, from offering molestation to any one, they slunk into holes and corners, and allowed themselves to be slaughtered almost without making resistance.

It is said, that the mere act of striking a light with flint and steel, has often the effect of intimidating a wolf ; and that the rattling of a chain not unfrequently answers the like purpose. In the event of a person, when unarmed, being attacked by these blood-thirsty brutes, these things are worth knowing ; for, though apparently trifling in themselves, they might be the means of saving his life.

In some parts of Scandinavia, when people are travelling during the winter-time over extended plains, lakes, &c. which are known to be much frequented by wolves, it is the custom to attach a long rope to the back of the sledge ; the serpentine motion that this makes, when the vehicle is proceeding, has, it is said, the effect of deterring these animals from making their attacks.

CHAPTER XIV.

Journey to Stockholm.—Lake Mälarn.—Franska Wardshus.

HAVING occasion to proceed to Stockholm, I set off on the evening of Wednesday, the 23rd January, for that place.

Before starting, I directed Elg, who was anxious to return forthwith to Brunberg, to make some needful arrangements about his little farm, to use his best endeavours during my absence to get a bear on foot. The better to effect this object, I allowed him to make use of my dogs. I directed him, however, to meet me at Lapp-cottage on the 10th of February, by which time I anticipated I should be returned from the capital.

As the Råda and Gräs lakes, which lay in our course, were firmly frozen over, we kept principally on their surface. On these fine pieces of water regular routes were now marked out, in the manner of which I have made mention, small pines, or the trees themselves, being placed in an upright position, at stated intervals, to keep the traveller in the proper track. The ice was at

this time in excellent order for sledging, and we therefore glided along its surface with great rapidity.

On reaching Sunnemo, a hamlet situated, as I have said, at fourteen or fifteen miles to the southward of Lapp-cottage, I took up my quarters for the night. Here there is a smelting-house (Hyttan) belonging to the Uddeholm Company, of which Mr. Emanuel Geijer has the superintendence, from whom I received, on this, as on other occasions, much hospitality.

There are extensive iron mines at no very great distance from this place; these are situated in the district of Bergslagen. The ore is not particularly productive, as I understood it did not yield more than about thirty per cent. In parts of Lapland, I have seen ore containing seventy or eighty per cent. of that metal. But in the districts in which this was found, there was not sufficient wood for the purpose of smelting it, and it was therefore of little value.

When the ore comes from the Swedish mines, it is piled upon layers of fir, and partially melted; it is then pounded by vast hammers moved by water, and afterwards liquified in a furnace of charcoal, whence it runs into a long mould of sand. As soon as it hardens, it is drawn out and laid in piles in the open air. These enormous masses, or rather pigs, are then beaten into bars.

On the following morning, Thursday, 24th

January, when we had twenty degrees of cold, I took leave, after breakfasting, of Sunnemo, and set off for the capital. I had now my choice of two roads; by the more regular and better one, which led through the towns of Christinehamn and Orebro, the distance was upwards of two hundred and sixty English miles; whilst the other, which was by the way of Philipstad, was between twenty and thirty miles less. The latter road lay, for a considerable part of the distance, through a very hilly country, and for the first thirty miles, indeed, it was a mere track; but as it was the shorter of the two, I decided upon taking it.

Our route lay through the forest, the scenery on every hand being wild and picturesque. The weather was very fine, which added much to the pleasure of the journey. The track we pursued was in general very bad; this was owing to its having been much used during the winter for the conveyance of coke, ore, &c. to Sunnemo, and other smelting-houses. From this cause, though the distance to Bosjö, the first stage, was little more than ten miles, it was the middle of the day before we reached it.

At this place, which is finely situated in the solitudes of the forest, there is a considerable forge and smelting-house, belonging to Mr. Otterdahl, of Gothenburg, of whom I have spoken elsewhere. Here, at the pressing solicitation of Mr. Erickson,

the manager of the concern, I was induced to remain to dinner.

About two in the afternoon, after procuring a fresh horse, I took my leave of Bosjo, and resumed my journey. My route, as heretofore, lay through the forest, the surrounding scenery partaking of a rather bold and picturesque character. Philipstad, a small town containing a thousand or two of inhabitants, was my next stage, but though at only some sixteen miles distance, owing to the wretched state of the track, the sun was sinking below the horizon before we reached that place.

After leaving Philipstad, where I had been delayed some little while for a horse, I proceeded through a hilly and deeply-wooded country three stages farther, when, finding a remarkably good post-house, I took up my quarters for the night. The quicksilver was at this time at zero. As I was anxious to get forward, and as I anticipated being still more delayed for horses as I proceeded, I now sent my förebud in advance.

The next morning at seven o'clock, during a fall of snow, I resumed my journey. As I now found horses in readiness at the several post stations, I got on as fast as I desired; indeed, including stoppages, I accomplished near seven miles within the hour. My route, in general, lay through a deeply-wooded country; but it was

much more level than heretofore. It seemed to be rather thinly populated.

Though in the early part of the day I proceeded pretty expeditiously, as I advanced to the southward my progress became very much slower : this was in consequence of the roads, in places, being almost bare of snow. By the time that I reached Arboga, indeed, which was at about six in the evening, there was hardly a sufficiency for the purpose of sledging.

This town, which is in the province of Westmanland, contains a rather considerable population. It is situated at no great distance from the western extremity of the Mälarn, the second, or third lake in regard to size in Sweden. The length of the Mälarn from east to west is about a hundred miles, but its breadth is not at all proportionate. It is finely studded with islands throughout its whole extent ; and its shores, which are lined with towns, hamlet, and villas, are, like the islands, wooded in most places to the water's edge. In point of beautiful scenery, this lake is surpassed by few in Scandinavia.

In the summer season, steam-boats ply between Stockholm and Arboga. Though the distance is about a hundred and twenty miles, the voyage is performed in a day. I made the passage on one occasion, and was highly delighted with the charming prospects that met the eye on every hand.

At Arboga I overtook my förebud ; but thinking that, if I travelled throughout the night, I might probably find horses at the several post-houses, I determined not to make a second halt, but to push forward at once for Stockholm, which was then at about one hundred and ten miles to the eastward.

My route lay through a champaign and level country, and through the towns of Köping, Westerås, and Euköping, and at no great distance from the northern shores of the noble and beautiful lake Mälarn ; but I saw nothing of the scenery on this occasion, as all nature was shrouded in darkness.

Though in the forest and sheltered situations there was a little snow upon the ground ; in the more open parts of the country the wind had driven it from the road, and this, in consequence, was in many parts altogether bare ; added to this evil, the frost partially broke up during the night, and it came on to blow heavily from the westward. From these causes, travelling became both tedious and fatiguing, for I was often necessitated to get out of my sledge, and to walk alongside of it for long distances together.

When we had proceeded to within about thirty miles of Stockholm, the country assumed a much bolder and more picturesque character, and became more deeply wooded. Henceforward there was, in most places, a sufficiency of snow upon the

road for sledging, and we therefore got on something better. A little before we arrived at that place, we passed Haga, a summer residence of the King.

Though I was not much delayed for horses, and though I made the most expedition I was able, owing to the state of the roads, it was six o'clock in the evening before I reached the capital.

During this little journey from Wermeland, I did not see a single head of game of any sort or kind. I thought it very probable I might have fallen in with some wolves, but I had not the good fortune to meet with any of those ravenous brutes. If that had been the case, I might probably have given a good account of them, as I had two guns lying ready loaded in my sledge.

It was dark when I reached Stockholm, and as I had no time to look out for other quarters, I took up my abode at the *Franska Wärdshus*, or, in other words, the Hôtel de France. Here, though I did not meet with the best accommodations possible, I found the charges very reasonable, as I had two tolerably good rooms at the rate of something less than two shillings the day; every thing else was moderate in proportion.

Captain Brooke gives a sorry though humorous description of this hotel. That officer, who was then on his way from exploring Lapland, says—

“ We hardly knew whither to direct our course, Stockholm not abounding in places of accommodation for the traveller. Lunsted the Swede, however, recommended so warmly the Franska Wärdshus, otherwise the French Hotel, that we determined upon repairing to it. He boasted of the magnificent reception we should meet with, the splendid rooms, and, above all, the good cheer. This was comfortable news to us, who had fared but meagerly for some time past ; and proceeding without delay to the *Regerings gatan* (Regency street), we soon found ourselves at the door of a lofty, dirty-looking house, the interior of which I did not doubt would very much belie its outward semblance. A large pair of folding-gates admitted our sledges into a small court-yard ; and a dirty old woman, coming out with an end of lighted candle, conducted us up a staircase, which, from its filthy state, had almost the appearance of leading to a hen-roost ; and throwing open a door, we were all ushered into a small apartment, unincumbered with furniture, and corresponding, in every point, so admirably with the staircase, that we began to suspect the statement of the good qualities of the Hôtel de France had been rather too highly coloured. The Swedish language varies somewhat from the Norwegian ; and the pronunciation is so different, that I was not the only one of the party who found a difficulty in making out what was said. I had expected to have found, at least in a

French hotel, the language of France spoken by the whole of the servants. This was so far from being the case, that not a soul understood a word of it, with the exception of a porter, who spoke what, on inquiry, I was told was French. However the Franska Wärdshus may be undeserving of its title in some respects, in others it fully merited it; since its total want of cleanliness, I am bold to affirm, might have placed it on a level with any hotel in Paris."

CHAPTER XV.

Stockholm.—Public edifices.—Salubrity.—English place of Worship.—Game in Markets.—Provisions.—Hotels.—Lodgings.—Clubs.—Society.—Balls.—Sledging Parties.—The King and Royal Family.—Count Wetterstedt.—The Court.—Orders of Knighthood, &c.—The Army and Navy.

STOCKHOLM is built on seven small rocky islands, at the junction of the waters of the Mälarn with an inlet of the Baltic; the communications between the different parts of the city being kept up, as may be supposed, by numerous bridges. It is singularly and romantically situated, and contains about eighty thousand inhabitants. The streets are in general narrow, and the pavement is not the best possible: there are no flag-stones for foot-passengers.

From being the capital, Stockholm possesses considerable trade: it exports, annually, about thirty-one thousand tons of bar iron, and a proportionate quantity of other products common to Sweden. The harbour, which is land-locked, is large and capacious, and usually contains many vessels from distant parts.

Stockholm boasts of many handsome public edifices : the palace, which is situated in the centre of the city, is said to be among the finest buildings of its kind in Europe. Here there is an Armoury, Museum of Natural History, &c.; it also contains some good paintings.

The Military Academy, the Senate-house, the Arsenal, the Ridderholm Church, where several of the kings of Sweden are interred, and among the rest the Lion of the North, Charles the Twelfth, together with many other things too numerous to particularize, are all deserving the attention of the stranger.

Several of the squares in Stockholm are decorated with remarkably fine bronze statues of some of the most distinguished monarchs who have wielded the Swedish sceptre. More than one of these are executed in a superior style, and they are said to have cost very large sums of money.

The royal palaces of Ulricsdahl, Rosersberg, Haga, Rosendahl, and Drottningholm, all situated in the vicinity of Stockholm, are, either from the natural beauty of the situation or their internal magnificence, well worth a visit.

From the rocky nature of the soil, and from there being few marshes in the vicinity, one would be inclined to imagine Stockholm must be a healthy place : but I have more than my doubts as to this being the case. Indeed, I am inclined to think fevers, and other disorders are usually

more prevalent in that capital than in many parts of Sweden. Possibly this may be partly owing to the water, as this, in some parts of the town, is very bad : there are, nevertheless, very fine springs to be met with.

Though there are a considerable number of British residents in Stockholm, there is neither a chaplain attached to the Embassy nor a clergyman of the Established Church, settled there. A place of worship, however, has been opened within the last two or three years, where the Rev. Mr. Stevens, of the Wesleyan Methodist persuasion, officiates. The sermons of that highly-talented gentleman, delivered *extempore*, as well in Swedish as in English, are much admired : this, together with his amiable manners, has obtained for him great and well-deserved popularity, as well among his own countrymen as the natives.

The Stockholm market was, at this time, supplied with an immense quantity of game of various kinds, in a frozen state ; the price in consequence was very moderate. A brace of capercali, cock and hen, might be purchased for two shillings and sixpence, or three shillings ; and other birds in the like proportion. Rein-deer venison, which is brought from Lapland, was likewise cheap.

The principal part of the game exposed for sale came from the more Northern of the Swedish

provinces. I could never ascertain the quantity brought to Stockholm annually, but it must be immense. Lieut. Oldenburg, assured me there were about two thousand sledge loads. Now, as each of these vehicles carries from twelve to fourteen hundred pounds, some idea may be formed of the immense number of birds consumed in the capital every winter.

A peasant with his own gun, or with snares, can never produce a sufficiency of game in a season to load a sledge; those who bring it to market, therefore, buy it up in different parts of the country. Few, from their individual exertions, can kill more in the course of a season than from two hundred to three hundred birds of all kinds.

From Stockholm being thus well supplied with game in the winter-time, people are led to imagine it must be very abundant in Scandinavia: this, I apprehend, is no fair criterion as to the quantity that is to be found in that peninsula; for it must be remembered, that the three or four hundred thousand birds annually brought to the capital are not killed in a single district or province, but are collected from a tract of country very much larger than the United Kingdom.

The price of butcher's meat is moderate at Stockholm. Beef, mutton, pork, &c. may be purchased for about twopence the pound. The common fruits and vegetables are also cheap.

Fish, as I have said, is scarce and dear in Stockholm. The shell-fish all comes from the western coast of Sweden.

The hotels in Stockholm, if they be really worthy of that appellation, are not, as I have shown, famous either for their cleanliness or comfort. They are inferior, indeed, to what one meets with in many of the provincial towns in Sweden. It is rather unaccountable how this can happen in the capital of a country.

Though the hotels may not be remarkable for their accommodation, &c. very good lodgings are attained at a moderate cost. A princely set of apartments are procurable at about twenty shillings the week.

There is an excellent *Restaurateur's*, called the *Bondiska Huset*, at Stockholm, where a man may dine sumptuously and have his pint of wine for two shillings and sixpence, or three shillings. This is frequented by the first people.

The Noble's club, called the *Société*, is said to be one of the most splendid establishments of the kind in Europe. This forms a great convenience to the traveller, as, if he be properly introduced, he is most liberally permitted to become a temporary member; and thus, at a trifling expense, he may enjoy the first society of the place. Here a man may dine admirably for a couple of shillings; and he has besides the benefit of card, reading, and billiard-rooms.

The usual dinner hour in Stockholm, even at the first Swedish houses, is two or three o'clock. The *corps diplomatique*, however, commonly take that meal something later.

From Stockholm not being an overgrown city, society there is on a very pleasant footing. If a stranger, indeed, bring a single good introduction along with him, he may presently become acquainted with every body. Visits are usually paid at an early hour in the evening; no invitation is requisite; if the lady of the house be at home, one is admitted; and, instead of being squeezed to death in attempts to enter the room, as is often the case with us in England, one may perhaps find her quite alone, or sitting with two or three friends. Tea is brought in by and by, three or four more casually drop in, and the evening is spent in conversation, cards, or music; supper is afterwards introduced in the usual way, and the party separates. "These little *soirées*," Captain Brooke truly says, "though they may not consist of more than ten or twelve persons, are the more agreeable, because devoid of ceremony and ostentation; and a foreigner, in particular, is better pleased to be enabled thus to make himself acquainted with the habits and manners of a people, than to gain his knowledge of them from that kind of society, which, guided alone by fashion and effect, is necessarily artificial and constrained."

French is universally spoken by every one in

good society in Stockholm; most people are as conversant with it as with their native tongue. The Swedes have a great aptitude for acquiring foreign languages; many of the higher classes, in fact, are familiar with most of those of Europe.

Stockholm was very gay at the period of my visiting it; the rigours of a Northern winter having driven many of the Swedish aristocracy from the country. There were balls, public or private, almost every night. Those of the *Amaranthe*, or order of Friendship, and *Innocence*, or order of Innocence, were most splendid. These took place frequently, and were often attended by one branch or other of the Royal family; seven or eight hundred people were not uncommonly present on these occasions.

The Swedish ladies are admirable dancers. It is thought that, among the higher classes, there are many who fully equal the French in that accomplishment.

The members of the orders of the *Amaranthe* and *Innocence*, as well as several other societies, wear very splendid medals, or other decorations, on the occasion of their assembling: these, together with rich dresses and uniforms, add greatly to the brilliancy of the ball-room.

Wheel carriages were nearly altogether discarded at this time from Stockholm, sledges being substituted in their stead. In most instances, however, the bodies of the carriages were still

made use of; for, after being separated from the wheels, they were placed on sledges; thus, the same vehicle, with a little alteration, answers equally well for winter as summer. The open sledge was also in very general use.

The Queen's equipage was most magnificent: her Majesty's sledge was usually drawn by six white horses; and as it glided rapidly over the snow, it had a most splendid appearance.

There were many sledging parties (*Släd parti*) going forward at this time in Stockholm. Those who were to take a part in them usually assembled at the house of one of the company, when a splendid *dejeuner à la fourchette* was prepared. Subsequently they would proceed together on some little expedition into the country. Twenty or thirty of these equipages, each of which usually contain a Scandinavian beauty, passing through the streets of the metropolis in close succession, presented, as may be supposed, a most imposing *spectacle*.

Though the needful etiquette to support the dignity of a monarchical government is kept up at the Swedish Court, where I have had the honour to be present on more than one occasion, it is not, I believe, remarkably punctilious in regard to mere matters of form. In fact, the Sovereign himself, like a sensible man, dislikes and despises ostentation; and always avoids ceremony and parade when he can do so with propriety.

Among the small number of extraordinary men which the nineteenth century has produced, Charles John, the present King of Sweden, must ever occupy a distinguished place. Embracing, in his early youth, the career of arms as his favorite pursuit, he has, by a succession of glorious deeds, too numerous here to particularize, not only raised himself to the highest degree of the military profession, but established a fame that must descend to the remotest posterity. Endowed with talents of the highest order as a statesman, so seldom to be met with in the warrior, it would seem as if Nature, intending him to occupy a place among monarchs, had endowed him with these rare acquirements to promote the happiness of the Scandinavian people.

His Majesty's prime Minister at the present time is Count Wetterstedt :—gifted with superior talents as a diplomatist ; indefatigable, upright, urbane, he has deservedly acquired the undivided confidence of the King, and the universal esteem of his fellow-citizens. Unassuming and accessible to all, this Minister discharges the duties of his important office with a zeal and perseverance that will long endear him to his country, whose welfare and prosperity is nearest to his heart.

The Court of Stockholm is graced by very many amiable and lovely women, who would vie, in point of beauty and accomplishments, with any in the world.

Pre-eminent among these is the consort of Oscar, Crown Prince of Sweden. This Princess, who is the daughter of the late Eugene Beauharnois, Viceroy of Italy, has fulfilled the ardent wishes of the nation, by giving birth to three sons.

Their Royal Highnesses are extremely popular throughout the country; their amiable and condescending manners having endeared them to all ranks of people. During the winter season, the Prince and his consort reside at the palace in Stockholm; but they usually spend the summer months at Rosendahl, or at Drottningholm, a delightful retreat situated on an island of the Mälarn, at about seven miles from the capital.

The Prince is a man of great talents and application to business: I have been told by those who have been much about his person, that there are few things he undertakes that he does not succeed in. His Royal Highness speaks Swedish almost like a native; the King, however, only converses in the French tongue.

On gala-days, the Swedish Court presents a very splendid appearance; for, independently of rich dresses, a vast number of honorary decorations are worn on these occasions. I subjoin the particulars of the several orders of knighthood at present existing in Sweden.

1st. Order.—The Seraphim: only one class, given to people of high rank, and the great dig-

nitaries of the kingdom, for meritorious services to the State. The decoration is a large silver star worn on the left breast, and also a broad light blue ribband worn on the shoulder from right to left. The order of the Seraphim is the only one to which pensions are attached, and these are confined to either four or six of the oldest commanders. The order was instituted by Eric XIV. the son of Gustavus Wasa. On the star is inscribed I. H. S. (or Jesus Hominum Salvator, signifying Jesus the Saviour of mankind). The number is limited to about thirty.

2d. Order.—The Polar Star, consisting of knights and commanders, originally instituted as a reward for services rendered about the Court, and also for civil services, now distributed generally to all classes, more particularly to literary men : number unlimited. Decoration for the commanders, a white star worn on the left breast ; also a smaller star suspended around the neck by a black ribband : for the knights, a small white star attached to the button-hole by a black ribband.

3d Order.—The Sword, in four classes.

1st class.—This is given for long military services, whether in war or peace. Decoration—a small star attached by a blue-and-yellow ribband to the button-hole.

2d class.—Commanders. This is given in augmentation of and in addition to the star. The decoration is a broad yellow-and-blue ribband worn

across the shoulder, with a small star, as usual, attached to it.

3d class.—Likewise Commanders. — Decoration: In addition to all the above, a star upon the left breast.

4th class—2 sub-classes—1st. Knights of the Grand Cross. In addition to all the former decorations, a large star suspended round the neck. 2d—Commanders of the Grand Cross. Decoration: A plain sword on the left breast of the coat, under the star. These distinctions can only be given to officers who have gained battles; the former when commanding at least six thousand, the latter twenty thousand men.

In addition to the four classes of the Sword, there is another honorary distinction belonging to that order, called the Medal of the Sword. This is given to soldiers as well as officers, for distinguished services rendered during a time of war. On the medal is inscribed “For brave conduct on the field of battle.” (För tapperhet i Fäldt.) If the medal be given to a soldier, it is composed of silver; but if to an officer, of gold.

4th Order.—Wasa. Instituted by Gustavus Wasa. This order was intended as a reward for improvements in agriculture, the arts and sciences, &c.; it was also given to men of commercial eminence. Now generally distributed. Number unlimited. In three classes—Knights, Commanders, Knights Grand Crosses. Decoration for the

Knights, a medal (on which is a representation of a wheat-sheaf, the arms of Wasa's illustrious family, around which are the initials of the founder,) attached to the button-hole by a green riband. For the Commanders: to the above a broad green riband worn over the right shoulder, as well as a large medal suspended round the neck. For the K.G.C. in addition to the above, a star upon the left breast.

5th Order.—The Order of Charles the XIIIth, believed to be an order of Freemasons, having up to this moment only been given to members of that order. Decoration: a red cross suspended around the neck by a red riband, and a red cross worn on the left breast of the coat.

With the exception of the Royal Guard, there were not many military in Stockholm at the time of my visiting that place. These were a very fine body of men, and, in soldier-like appearance, would probably vie with any in Europe. The military all wear mustachios.

The Swedish army is constituted of three descriptions of force: 1st, the regular troops; 2d, the *Indelta*; and 3d, the *Bevähring*.

The regular troops consist of two regiments of foot-guards, each twelve hundred strong; one regiment of cavalry of the guard, eight hundred; three regiments of marines, each twelve hundred men; three regiments of artillery, five thousand men; together, near twelve thousand men.

2d.—The Indelta is composed of either twenty-five or twenty-six regiments of infantry, and five of cavalry, amounting together to something above thirty thousand men.

During peaceable times this description of force is only called out for five or six weeks every year ; but there are previous meetings for the recruits ; this is usually about the month of June : they are marshalled, however, at their respective parish churches once every fortnight, or thereabouts.

Generally speaking, every two and a half Hemmans* are obliged to furnish one infantry soldier as a contingent to the Indelta. In the event of death, or that the soldier be incapable of service, the Hemmans find a substitute. The Indelta soldier receives no pay, excepting when he is called out by the Government : but he is provided with a snug cottage and a little land, on which, if he be industrious, he may always obtain a comfortable livelihood. The Hemmans provide the soldier with an outfit of clothes, in the first instance ; though subsequently he receives the needful supplies from the Government.

Only certain Hemmans (specified in the reign of Charles the Eleventh, the founder of the present military system in Sweden) furnish the Indelta cavalry soldier. Other Hemmans, however, contribute something towards the expense.

* The nature of a Hemman is described in vol. i. p. 59.

The Hemmans that furnish the cavalry soldier are obliged to provide a horse and accoutrements.

Though the Indelta may almost be called militia, they are equal to any regular troops in the world: the soldiers are all men of good character, and in the prime of life, and, from having a stake in the country, would naturally do their duty when opposed to an enemy. This species of force, as I have shown, costs the Government next to nothing, unless on actual service.

3d.—The Bevähring (from the word Bewara, to preserve,) consists entirely of infantry, and answers to a conscription. By the law of Sweden, every male of the age of twenty-one is inscribed in the Bevähring; he has then the choice of either the military or naval service. The term of service is limited to five years. During the first year, the conscript is exercised for a fortnight, but not subsequently, I believe, unless called out on active service.

The Bevähring amount to between fifty and sixty thousand men, and are divided into five classes. They are armed and clothed by the Government. In time of war, they are drafted into the Indelta; invariably, however, into their respective provincial regiments. This species of force is disposable at the King's pleasure, and, in the event of hostilities, can be sent out of the country.

From what I have stated, it will be seen that, though the regular army amounts to only twelve thousand men, the King of Sweden, in the event of war, has upwards of one hundred thousand muskets at his disposal. This is a force which, if ably commanded, and entrenched in the fastnesses of the Scandinavian forests, might almost set the world in arms at defiance.

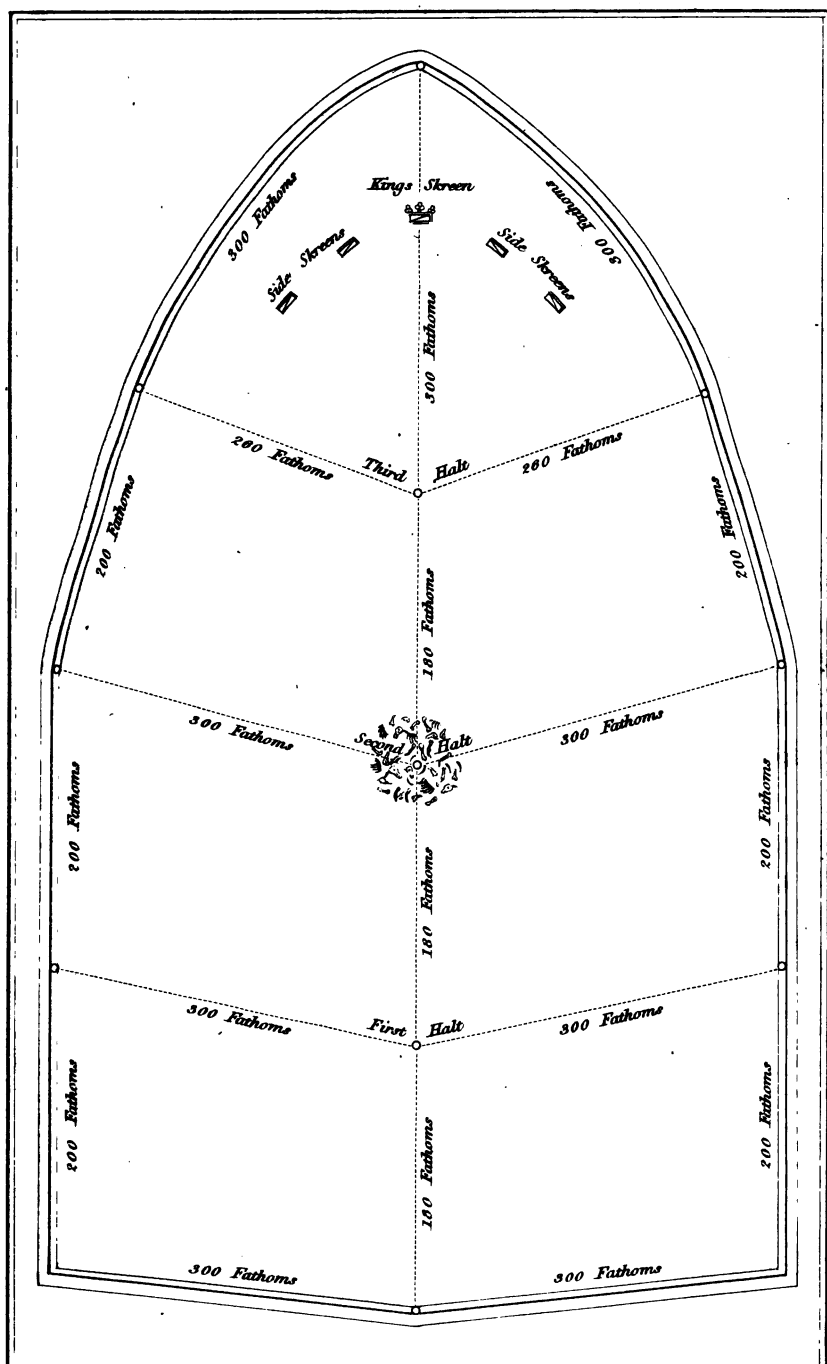
The Swedish Navy consists of—Ships of the Line, 10; Frigates, 13; Brigs, Cutters, &c. 19; Gallies, 28; Bomb Ketches, 10; Howitzers, 10; Gun-boats, 325; Sundries, 132.—Officers and men:—Admiral, 1; Vice-Admirals, 2; Rear-Admirals, 4; Commanders, 24; Captains, 16; 1st and 2nd Lieutenants, 176; Chaplains, 16; Surgeons, 21; Boatmen, 8121; Seamen, 14,824.—Total 23,205.

During my stay in Stockholm, I was favoured with a visit from Mr. Greiff, whose name I have so often brought before the reader. This gentleman, who is one of the oldest and best sportsmen in Sweden, took a very prominent part on the occasion of the political convulsions which agitated that country some years ago. He indeed it was that seized the person of the ex-King Gustavus, in which act the monarch slightly wounded him with a sword which he then held in his hand. Mr. Greiff, who is a man of herculean strength, wrested this weapon from his sovereign; when,

taking him up in his arms like a child, he conveyed him to a place of security. By thus periling his life, Mr. Greiff was perhaps a principal means of bringing about a bloodless revolution. His services on that occasion were not forgotten, he having been subsequently honoured with many marks of distinction.



PLAN OF SKALL PLATS FOR WOLVES NEAR STOCKHOLM.



CHAPTER XVI.

Winter Wolf-skalls.

WOLF-SKALLS are not unfrequent during the winter, in the vicinity of Stockholm. These, as I have said, are conducted at that period of the year in a very different manner to what is usual in the summer-time. I had hoped to have been a spectator on one of these occasions, but unfortunately no *chasse* took place during my stay in the capital.

The annexed plan represents a skall-plats, or hunting-place for wolves, situated at less than four miles from Stockholm. This was an area marked out in the forest by a pathway of about four paces in width. It was in the form, as may be seen, of a sugar-loaf, and two thousand four hundred fathoms, or four thousand eight hundred yards, in circumference. In the centre of the area, the lure, or carrion, to attract the wolves,*

* The better to attain this object, people are prohibited, under certain penalties, from exposing carrion of any kind within twenty-one miles of a skall-plats; similar to that of which I speak.

was deposited ; at its upper end are five skreens, or lodges ; these are intended for the accommodation of the sportsmen when a skull takes place ; that in the centre is reserved for the use of such parts of the royal family as may think proper to participate in the amusement.

As soon as the snow falls, this skull-plats is watched both night and day by persons appointed for the purpose. When therefore it is discovered by the tracks that a sufficient number of wolves are congregated at the carrion, a singular expedient is adopted to prevent those animals again retreating from the area.

This is effected by extending a piece, or rather many pieces of canvass (*Jagttyg*), on poles previously driven into the ground for the purpose, around the whole skull-plats. On this are painted, in very glaring colours, the heads of men, animals, &c. If the wolves be once surrounded by this artificial, barrier, it is said that the hideous figures, thus dangling in the wind, usually deter those animals from leaving the place.

As every thing is in readiness on the spot, this operation ought not to occupy more than two hours : when it is completed, information is sent off to the authorities, and the requisite number of people to form the cordon is instantly ordered out.

When the men are assembled, a line of circum-

vallation is at once formed about the area. The nets are now set up around the smaller end of the skull-plats; these may be about seven feet in height, and may extend for one thousand or one thousand five hundred paces in length. The people at this point remain stationary, whilst those who are placed at the broader extremity of the figure advance upon their comrades. The transverse lines marked upon the drawing represent pathways cut through the trees. On reaching these, the driving division halts and rectifies disorders. Thus the wolves, or other wild beasts, are gradually forced towards the skreens, or lodges, where they are of course readily slaughtered.

The above plan of killing wolves in the winter season is adopted in many parts of Sweden.

Mr. Greiff has treated rather fully upon the several ways in which wolves may be destroyed. I subjoin a few of that gentleman's observations regarding the winter-skalls.

"The inducement to form a place of lure must be derived from the reports which come in to the governor from the country, of the damage done by wild beasts during the summer.

"When the Öfwer-Jägmästare, or head forester, has received intelligence on the preceding point, he examines the woods in those tracts where the wolves have done most damage, and

have probably whelped, and makes choice of the most suitable spot on which a place of lure can be formed.

“A suitable spot means one which is covered with a tolerably thick wood of large trees, especially spruce, where the ground is undulating, and which contains fens and mosses; and of such great extent, that the pathway (Skallgatan) does not pass over fields or plains which prevent the tracing of the animals, after a fall of snow, or sleet. The wood must be left quiet from passeng-ers, or woodsmen, during the time of hunting, or, in other words, the winter season; and should be situated near the centre of the parish, whose peasants are to form the skall. A cottage should be near the place, that the under-huntsmen may find quarters, and have opportunity to call up in haste the men employed to fasten on the Jagttyg or hunting-cloth, by which the daily watch of a whole division of the country for this purpose will be avoided.

“The hewing down of trees, for the purpose of forming the skall-plats, or place of lure, should take place in the month of August or September, when the assistance of the authorities must be required. If the wood is not of the thickest and heaviest kind, the skall-plats should be ready in two or three days, with thirty to forty labourers per day.”

Mr. Greiff then describes the manner in which

the skull-plats is to be prepared; but as the particulars would probably prove little interesting to the reader, I have thought it best to omit them.

Mr. Greiff goes on to say: "When the skull-plats is ready, it must be kept undisturbed* by the woodsmen from all noise.

"In the month of October, when the peasants begin to kill their worn-out horses, the head-ranger gives them intimation that they shall, in conformity to orders from authority, transport them to the hunting or lure-place, and give the necessary instructions for their skinning, and also that a huntsman is at hand to direct that the carrion should be laid in the proper place.

"As soon as the ground is frozen, the hunting-cloths are brought out, which must be smoothed well down and beaten with fir branches, so that all shall be in order for the first falling snow; for the hunts which can be formed by the traces on the first snow, or before Christmas, are the surest.

"Two huntsmen must be ordered to keep watch at the skull-plats, the day on which the snow has fallen; and they should go round it three times a-day, morning and evening, and once

* For the better furtherance of this object, as is the case with our decoys in England, people are prohibited under certain fines from sporting within about two miles of the skull-plats, during that period of the year when the carrion is exposed, and of which due notice is given.

during the night with a lantern of tin, made so that it only throws light from the bottom; the marks of the animals going in and out are to be carefully noted each time, and written down in a journal, and whether they follow each other in numbers, or go singly.

“ An experienced huntsman will soon discover at what time the animals visit the carrion; the 8th, 11th, and 14th day is usually the period, after they have once eaten of it. It happens that wolves, early in winter, get into the skull-plats and lie there several days, without their traces being discovered; and on such occasions it is necessary to drive them gently out again, in order to ascertain their number.

“ Each time of going round the area, every track is to be swept out with a long broom; and if the huntsman at any time have occasion to step out of the pathway (Skallgatan), the marks should be immediately swept out. Birds of prey, such as ravens and crows, must not be frightened away, because they entice the wild beasts by their cries, and give them confidence.

“ The huntsmen examine each his side of the skull-plats: should it be found, when they meet, that traces of animals having entered, are sufficiently numerous to fasten up the hunting-cloths, the men for that purpose are called out immediately, and the fastening is to be executed with

all possible expedition, and the whole ought to be finished within two hours.

“The fastening ought to commence either at the top or at the bottom of the skull-plats, where two rolls of cloth should be lying ready : one man unloosens the roll—the other carries the pole on which it is wound :—they advance along the line, unwinding as they go. The roll should be wound round the pole, so that it unwinds correctly and easily. A third man fastens the cloth round the end of each stake. When the hunting-cloth is fastened up, the men so employed return each along his allotted distance, and rectifies what he finds amiss : the pieces of cloth ought to hang three feet from the ground. The huntsmen then reconnoitre the skull-plats, to ascertain whether the animals have escaped during the fastening ; if that be the case, the hunting-cloths are immediately taken down, wound up, and laid in their places.

“When it is found that the animals are enclosed, messengers, who ought to be always in readiness, should be immediately despatched, to apprise the people of the time of assembling for the hunt, and of the number required, according to the size of the skull-plats, reckoning eight, and at the utmost ten, hunting paces between each person.

“From the moment it is ascertained that the animals are enclosed, and until the hunt takes

place, the utmost silence should be observed at and about the skall-plats.

“ When the people are assembled, and the numbers communicated to the head-ranger, they are to advance silently to the skall-plats: they are to be formed in two divisions, either at the top or at the bottom. A huntsman goes before each division, and a huntsman after. They place each peasant in his proper situation, and inform him what he is to attend to, namely, to stand on the outside of the hunting-cloths; to remain silent; and not to go from his post: but if the animals show themselves, he is to shake and strike against the cloths with his hunting-staff or spear.

“ The skalfogdar, or subordinate officers of the hunt, are to be chosen from trusty people, who are acquainted with the locality; soldiers are preferable: these, together with the superfluous huntsmen, are to be distributed among the body which is to advance, and should, for the preservation of better order, be distinguished by some badge.

“ Should there be any of the Royal Family present, the head-ranger himself should advance in the centre; otherwise, a trusty huntsman, who should preserve a steady pace in his advance.

“ The driving division ought to advance slowly, because too much haste brings the people sooner into disorder. The movement ought to be effected without shots or cries; only they are to strike the trees with their hunting-poles, and examine

carefully if any animal has hidden himself, or lies dead.

“When the people have advanced to the farthest point, the wild animals which have been shot are to be conveyed to the King’s skreen.

“No other than good marksmen shall be allowed to carry a gun.”

Mr. Greiff has given some farther directions regarding the manner in which the wolf-skalls is to be organized and conducted; but, as they are of a something similar nature to those I have made mention of when speaking of bear-skalls, I have not thought it necessary to insert them.

During my stay at Stockholm, I visited the skull-plats of which I am speaking;—this was along with Mr. Arenius, the head-ranger of the district, who was so obliging as to explain the nature and purport of every thing.

On this occasion, I was in company with Count Charles Frederick Piper, a Swedish nobleman of high rank. The Count held the appointment of *Förste Hofjägmästare*, which may be rendered in French, (for in English I know of no equivalent,) *Grand Veneur de la cour*. As this is the second office in the gift of the Swedish Crown, in regard to the forests, I was of course at head-quarters for sporting information. To this accomplished nobleman I am under the greatest obligations, as well for his attentions whilst I remained at Stockholm, as at an after period, when I partook

of the hospitalities of his princely residence at Löfstad.

At this time, the ground was covered with snow to the depth of six or eight inches: there were then, as we saw by their tracks, one, if not two wolves feeding upon the carrion. As there were more of those animals, however, known to be in the vicinity, which, it was daily expected, might follow the example of their comrades,—and as it was contrary to rule to call out the people, unless a greater number were within the skull-plats, Mr. Arenius did not feel himself justified in taking this step, which he much regretted, as he was very anxious to gratify my curiosity, in witnessing the destruction of some of these pernicious beasts. Though no *chasse* took place whilst I remained in the capital, in the commencement of the following April, five wolves were one day slaughtered in this very skull-plats.

Very considerable numbers of those animals are sometimes killed in the winter-skalls: I have heard of as many as fifteen being shot in a day. On these occasions, wolves never, I believe, turn upon their assailants; but, when they find escape impossible, they generally skulk, and endeavour to hide themselves. Mr. Greiff says, they do not attempt to leap over the nets, but always endeavour to creep under them.

No one is allowed to use balls at a wolf-skall, for fear of accidents; these animals are therefore destroyed with large shot.

CHAPTER XVII.

Journey from Stockholm to Wermeland; thence to Warnäs.—
Wolves.—Snow-Skates.—Skarbogar.

ON the evening of the 8th of February, I took my departure from Stockholm, during a slight fall of snow, and set off on my way to Wermeland.

Whilst I staid in that place, I received much hospitality from several of my countrymen, as well as others. This was more particularly the case, as regarded the Honourable John Bloomfield, who, in the absence of his noble father, was then acting as our representative at the Swedish court. To General Count Suchtelen, the Russian Ambassador, I was also under many obligations.

On this occasion, I took the road which runs to the southward of the Mälarn; as, from previous inquiries, I had ascertained the sledging was much better in that part of the country than by the northern route, by which I had proceeded to Stockholm. The distance, besides, was nearly equal.

Though I had no förebud in this instance, I was fortunate enough to find horses in readiness at the different stations ; and the roads being in good order, I got on pretty rapidly. By about two o'clock on the succeeding day, having then accomplished upwards of a hundred miles, I reached Arboga, the town of which I have made mention. I of course saw little of the scenery on this occasion, my journey having been principally made in the night-time ; but I should think the country was of too level a character to be particularly interesting.

I dined at Arboga, and from thence I retraced the route by which I had proceeded from Wermeland. Without making a single halt, other than such as were absolutely necessary, I now pushed on at once for Lapp-cottage.

As we advanced to the northward, however, and particularly after leaving Philipstad, our course was much impeded by the snow which had recently fallen. Though in the vicinity of Stockholm there were hardly more than a few inches, the ground in this part of the country was covered with it to the depth of two feet or more.

The ice besides, on the several lakes which lay in our route between Philipstad and Sunnemo, were now in a bad, if not dangerous state. This is generally the case after a deep fall of snow, and more particularly if the weather should be at all mild. The weight of that covering seems to assist the operation of the air confined beneath the sur-

face of the ice ; for an unusual number of windvaks now make their appearance. Independently of the danger of falling into these holes, partially concealed as they are by the snow, so much water exudes from them, as often to take a man half way up the leg. The quantity of snow above prevents this from congealing, and consequently it remains in a liquid state on the surface of the lake, or river, for a long while.

Though the ice, generally, was at this period more than two feet thick, there were several of these windvacks on the very track that we were pursuing, and in consequence we were obliged to make considerable detours to avoid them.

Though I made the most expedition I was able, for the above reasons, it was eight o'clock in the evening of the second day, after leaving Stockholm, before I reached my quarters. I had passed forty-eight hours in my sledge ; but, from being well protected with clothing, I suffered little inconvenience from the cold.

Here I found that Elg, agreeably to my directions, had preceded me by a few hours ; but it was with regret that I learnt from him that he had been unable to get a bear on foot during my absence. This was little to be wondered at, as immediately after my departure for Stockholm, so great a quantity of snow had fallen in Wermeland, that it was not easy to explore the forest : independently of the view being obstructed, the snow was

in so loose a state, that neither man nor dog could move with any thing like facility.

He informed me, however, that a bear was reported to be ringed near to Malung in Dalecarlia; and two others, though at some distance apart, in the vicinity of Granberg, a hamlet situated at near fifty miles to the north-east of my quarters.

Though we had not much reason to believe any of these bears were actually encircled, we determined, *pour passer le temps*, to reconnoitre the rings forthwith.

On the evening of Wednesday, the 13th of April, I therefore dispatched Elg with the dogs and baggage-sledge to Warnäs, a village situated on the eastern bank of the Klar, at about thirty-five miles to the northward of my quarters; this was about ten miles distance from Granberg.

On the following morning, the 14th, a little before nine o'clock, when the quicksilver was sixteen degrees below zero, I followed myself in the same direction.

Both the track by land, and the ice on the Klar, along the bed of which river we kept for a very considerable part of the way, were now in excellent order for sledging, and I therefore got on as expeditiously as I could wish; the faster probably, as, from the coldness of the temperature, the peasants, for their own sakes, felt little inclined to loiter on the way.

At Fastnas, the last post-station, where I procured a fresh horse, the people were complaining of the ravages of the wolves. A drove of those ferocious beasts, indeed, had destroyed and devoured, during the preceding night, a dog that was chained immediately near to the house: we saw their tracks in the little enclosure, or rather court-yard, in front of the building.

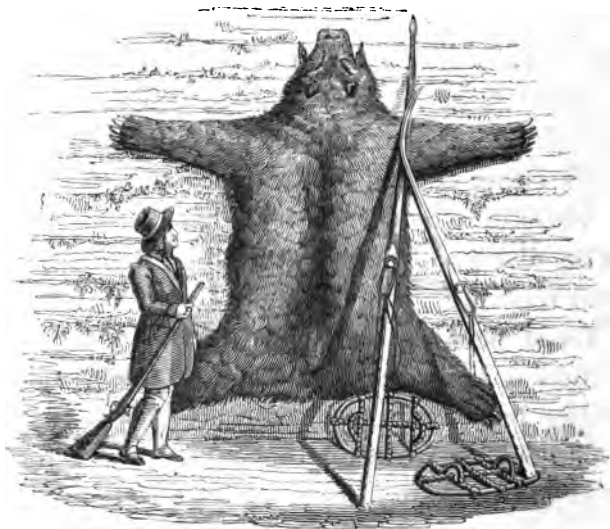
At Warnäs also, where I arrived at about three o'clock in the afternoon, and where my people had preceded me by several hours, the wolves had been very troublesome during the winter. But the inhabitants of that hamlet had fortunately succeeded in destroying one of those animals in a pitfall, either on that or the preceding day. We saw his skin extended to dry.

The distance from Warnäs to Granberg was about ten miles; but, owing to the track through the forest being entirely blocked up by the great quantity of snow that had recently fallen, and the evening being advanced, we were unable to procure a horse and sledge to convey us, or rather our baggage, to that place. As we were anxious, nevertheless, to reach it as soon as possible, we determined on taking only those things along with us of which we stood absolutely in need, and on forthwith setting off on foot.

The forest was, at this time, smothered with snow, the ground being covered with it to the

depth of from three to four feet. From this cause we were necessitated to make use of our skidor, or snow-skates.

These are depicted in the annexed woodcut; also a pair of *skarbogar*, of which I shall presently have occasion to make mention, and a bear-skin. I have introduced the latter, to show the manner in which the skin is usually taken from the bear in Scandinavia.



Snow-skates are, it is well known, very commonly made use of, during the winter season, in the Northern parts of Europe: when a person is conversant with them, nothing can answer the required purpose better.

The form of the skidor, though materially the same, varies a little in different countries, or even in districts.

In the parts of Scandinavia of which I now speak, the skida for the left foot was usually from nine to eleven, or even twelve feet in length; whilst that for the right seldom exceeded six or seven. This inequality of length was to enable a person to wheel about, in a manner which it is difficult to describe in writing, with greater facility; as well as that, when in broken or bad ground, he might lean the whole of his weight, if necessary, upon the shorter skate, which was constructed of stouter materials. The breadth of these skidor was between two and three inches.

In parts of Lapland, Finland, and Norway, again, those skidor that I have seen were much broader than the above; and they were also of an equal length, which seldom exceeded six or seven feet.

The foremost ends of all skidor are considerably turned up, to enable a person to avoid any little impediment with which he may happen to come in contact: they are fastened to the foot with withes, or with leathern straps, in so simple a manner, that a minute, or less, will suffice either to put them on or take them off: a pair may weigh from ten to fifteen pounds. The weight, however, is of the less consequence, as it rarely happens that one is necessitated to carry them.

In Wermeland and the adjacent parts, the skida for the left foot was always constructed of fir; that for the right, which was the shorter and stouter, of some tougher wood.

In very mountainous districts, the under part of the skidor is sometimes covered, either wholly or in part, with seal-skin: this, in a great degree, prevents a person from making a retrograde movement when ascending a steep acclivity.

In running, as it is termed, upon skidor, unless the snow is in an unfavourable state, they are never lifted from the ground; the motion is of a gliding nature, and, excepting as regards rapidity, something similar to that of the skate in common use with us in England.

In some instances, a person carries a single staff in his hand; in others, one in each hand: these serve to impel him forward, and also to retard his progress, which he effects by pressing the stick upon the snow, when too rapidly descending a declivity.

To use snow-skates, where the ground is pretty level, and free from obstructions, is not a very difficult acquirement; but to run upon them with facility in a deeply-wooded and mountainous country, thickly studded with fragments of rock, prostrate trees, &c. of the nature, in short, of the Dalecarlian and Wermeland forests, requires immense practice.

When in my noviciate, I not unfrequently re-

ceived one or two hundred tumbles in the course of the day ; sometimes, besides, I came with such violence against the trees, that I used to think I should be dashed to pieces, or that they would be uprooted ; but by dint of continued practice, the fatigue at first being excessive, I at last managed to get along moderately well.

When I first saw skidor brought into real play, though this, it is true, was by people who were among the first runners in Scandinavia, I was astonished and delighted with the skill and address with which these apparently unwieldy machines were managed.

It was on the descent of a lofty and precipitous hill, and when the men were going at a great pace : at times they were stooping nearly double, to avoid the overhanging branches ; at others, they were swerving their bodies to the one side, to save their guns, which were slung across their shoulders, from being injured by the trees ; and at almost every instant they were shifting their legs, so as to give their skidor such a direction as would enable them to avoid roots, stones, and other impediments.

From the length, &c. of the skidor, one might suppose a person would be continually breaking them ; this, it is true, does occasionally happen, particularly to people when they are in their noviciate ; the same pair, however, often lasts a man several years.

I have heard and read much of the wonderful rate at which a man may proceed upon skidor; but, I think, not a little misapprehension exists on that subject: it is true, if the ground be falling, and the snow in good order, he may go at almost any pace he pleases; but then it must be taken into consideration, that he has hills to contend with, and that, if these be at all precipitous, he is often obliged to proceed in a zig-zag direction: much time is therefore necessarily lost, before he can surmount them.

Almost every thing depends upon the state of the snow, and the nature of the country. If the former be sufficiently hard to bear, or even partially to support the skidor, and the latter flat, or only gently undulated, and pretty clear of obstructions, a good runner may certainly, for a while, accomplish six or seven miles within the hour; or should it be only for a short distance, perhaps very considerably more. If, on the contrary, the snow should be loose, which is most frequently the case in the Northern forests, and the skidor, in consequence, sink deep into it, and that the country be mountainous, thickly wooded, and full of rocks, dead timber, and other impediments, a person's pace is a most sorry one.

With every advantage, a man on skidor does not usually proceed at a much greater rate than a fast walker.

I feel incompetent to hazard an opinion as to

the distance, supposing the snow to be in good order, the line of country favourable, &c. that a man might run in the course of a day, upon skidor. But as the feet and ankles rarely suffer much inconvenience from the use of these implements, and as the lungs are not brought much into play, I should imagine fully more might be accomplished than by a person on foot.

I never, in my best days, was a good pedestrian,—so little of one indeed, that, let the emergency have been ever so great, I much doubt whether, by walking or running, I could have got over fifty miles in less than thirteen or fourteen successive hours. I think, however, that on skidor, supposing I had any particular object in view, I could perform that distance in considerably less time. When I come, therefore, to contrast my own pedestrian performances with those of others, I can readily imagine that men may be found who could perform fifty miles in seven or eight hours, and not impossibly a hundred in double that space of time.

As I have never made use of the American snow-shoes, it would be idle of me to make a comparison between them and the snow-skate common to the North of Europe.

The weight of the American snow-shoe is very trifling as compared with that of the skate, which is an immense advantage in the event of a person being obliged to carry them any considerable

distance. It is, besides, very probable that the shoe may answer better than the skate, if the snow be in a loose state. But leaving these two points out of the question, I apprehend the skate common to Scandinavia is immeasurably superior to the American snow-shoe.

If the skate be properly put on, it never injures, in the slightest degree, the feet or ankles. Hear what Captain Franklin, the celebrated Arctic traveller, when speaking of the snow-shoe, says on that subject.

“ The sufferings on these occasions can be but faintly imagined by a person who thinks upon the inconvenience of marching with a weight of between two or three pounds constantly attached to galled feet and swelled ankles. Perseverance and practice only will enable the novice to surmount this pain.”

Again.—“ The miseries endured during the first journey of this nature are so great, that nothing could induce the sufferer to take a second, whilst under the influence of present pain. He feels his frame weighed with insurmountable pressure ; he drags a galling and stubborn weight at his feet, and his track is marked with blood. The dazzling scene around him affords no rest to his eye—no object to divert his attention from his own agonizing sensations. When he sleeps, half his body seems dead, till quickened into feeling by the irritation of his sores.”

In the vicinity of Lapp-cottage, skidor were little used, and, in consequence, few people thereabouts could go even tolerably well with them. Farther to the southward, they were almost unknown. In the more northern districts of Wermeland, however, and particularly among the descendants of the Fins, there were many who could run capitably upon them.

As a substitute for skidor, when the snow was deep, the peasants usually provided themselves, when in the forest, with *skarbogar*, which are represented at page 230. These are frames of wickerwork, of a roundish, or rather oval shape, about fifteen inches in length, and twelve in breadth; but, independently of their very insufficiently answering the purpose for which they are required, owing to their very imperfect construction, they are continually liable to get out of order. But *skarbogar* are possessed of this advantage, that they are easily made, and as easily repaired.

I have occasionally seen horses provided with *skarbogar* in Dalecarlia. These consist of circular iron rings, of about ten or twelve inches in diameter, across which are several transverse bars of the same metal: they are fastened to the fetlock with leathern or other thongs: thus equipped, those animals necessarily straddle a little in their gait; but they are then enabled to traverse the forest in all directions, let the snow be ever so deep.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Journey to Granberg.—Mattias Mattsson.—Warm rooms.—
Beating the ring.—Night bivouac.

As neither Elg nor myself were conversant with the particular track we were about to pursue to Granberg, we were now necessitated to take a guide along with us. We had to wait for the man, however, upwards of two hours, that he might make, as he said, some needful preparations. From this cause, it was six o'clock in the evening before we left Warnäs. It was now dark; and as we had no moon, and the route was a most sorry one, we had not a very comfortable time of it.

To add to the evil, whilst we were waiting for our companion at Warnäs, he had been indulging in too liberal potations of brandy: though tolerably sober when we set off, he had not proceeded half the distance, before he became top-heavy, and was rolling about like a ninepin. At last, in short, he came down altogether. Here we should certainly have left him, for the liquor to

have evaporated, had we known the way to Granberg; but that not being the case, we could not well do without his assistance.

We were therefore necessitated to rouse him from his lethargy, (for to proceed of his own accord he was either unwilling or unable,) and almost to drive him before us. This caused not a little delay; so that, though the distance could easily have been performed in three hours by daylight, what with the darkness, and the fellow's drunkenness, it took us more than twice that time, and until two o'clock on the following morning, before we arrived at the end of our journey.

When we reached Granberg, a small Finnish hamlet, consisting of three families, situated in the province of Dalecarlia, and in the solitudes of the forest, we took up our quarters with a peasant named Mattias Mattsson, the same who, rumour said, had ringed the bear.

This man was a son of the individual of whom I have spoken, that distinguished himself by the successful pursuit of bears during the summer season; but he himself was not much of a chasseur.

Our host did not appear to be in very flourishing circumstances; he had no want, however, of the necessaries of life,—there being abundance of wholesome though coarse bread, milk, cheese, potatoes, &c. in the house.

My lodgings, on this occasion, were none of the

best; for there was only a single room, habitable at that period of the year, for the accommodation as well of the peasant's family, as of our party. This apartment was, fortunately, a pretty large one, so that the air was not quite so pestilential as is too often the case in the houses of the peasantry; but as I was tired, I quickly caused a bed of sweet hay to be prepared in one corner of the room, and as far removed as possible from the more habitable parts of it, that I might the better escape the vermin, &c.; here I managed to get two or three hours of tolerable repose.

My people fared better than myself: they shook down a truss or two of straw in a circular form around the fire; towards this they then placed their feet, and with their knapsacks for pillows, they thus had a most luxurious couch. If there are not beds to accommodate wayfaring persons, this is the plan universally adopted during the winter season, in the northern parts of Scandinavia.

It might be supposed that people thus lying without any other covering than their clothes would suffer much from the cold during the night season; but this is not usually the case, as the apartments of the peasantry are generally very warm. The houses of the Fins, or rather their descendants, that one meets with in the Wermland and adjacent forests, are, indeed, often heated to that degree that one would be glad to sleep

not only without a coverlid, but without any clothes at all. I remember once, when the cold was intense out of doors, exposing my thermometer in the coolest part of a Finnish room, when the quicksilver rose to ninety of Fahrenheit.

It seems extraordinary that the human frame should be capable of withstanding such extremes of heat and cold:—one moment to be within the Tropics, and the next in the Arctic regions. No people in the world, however, are more hardy than the Fins.

Between eight and nine o'clock, we left our homely couch, and after partaking of a hearty breakfast, we set out for our host's ring, which was situated about five miles to the north-west of Granberg; but we had no reason to be at all sanguine of success, as at the time the man encircled, as he imagined, the bear, there was little snow on the ground in places, and it was therefore not improbable the beast had, unperceived, betaken himself to another part of the country.

The snow at this time was, as I have observed, from three to four feet in depth, and so loose that our skidor sank considerably at every step; and we in consequence had to plough our way through it. To make the operation the more easy, we each of us, by turns, led the way; and thus those that came after, found an easy and well beaten track. When the snow is in the state I am describing, and there be two or three in company,

this is a common practice in the Northern forests. From this cause, our progress was very slow, so that it was past twelve o'clock before we reached the southern extremity of the ring. This was of no very considerable extent; possibly not more than three miles in circumference.

There were four of us in company, though only Elg and myself were armed with guns, when, after forming ourselves in line, we commenced beating the ground in the usual manner. The snow was at this time hanging on the closer brakes in such masses, that it was hardly possible to see more than a pace or two in advance.

But our endeavours to find the bear were unsuccessful; and at nightfall, therefore, as part of the ring still remained unbeaten, and as the distance to Granberg was considerable, we determined on bivouacking in the forest.

In the summer-time, as I have said, our fire for this purpose commonly consisted of only a few dried billets, which, as the weather at that season is usually mild, and the nights short, answered every necessary purpose; but now, that the temperature was severe, and the nights long, this description of fire would not have been sufficient to have protected us from the cold, unless it had been continually replenished and looked after. If our party had been large, this might easily have been arranged, by taking it in turns to keep watch; but as the contrary was the case, and as we were

fatigued after the exertions we had gone through during the day, this would not have been a light task. We adopted another plan therefore, common in that part of Scandinavia, which in every respect answered the purpose infinitely better.

In the first place, we looked out for a situation sheltered from the wind. We then sought for a moderately-sized tree, that had so far undergone the process of decay as to be perfectly dry. It was necessary, nevertheless, that the trunk should be quite sound, which was easily ascertained by striking it with the back of an axe; as, had it been rotten, it would have been consumed too rapidly. A green tree would not have answered the required purpose, as it would never have ignited properly. It was necessary, also, that the tree should be a Scotch fir (tall) *pinus sylvestris*, as the spruce (gran), *pinus abies*, burns very indifferently.

When we had met with such a tree as answered our purpose, which was after the lapse of a few minutes, there being abundance that are suitable in the Northern forests, one or more of the people quickly levelled it with the ground. As it was in the act of falling, however, we took care to give it such a direction as was most suitable for our bivouac.

We now chopped a log of about eight or ten feet in length from the thicker end of the tree; this we then laid longitudinally along the latter;

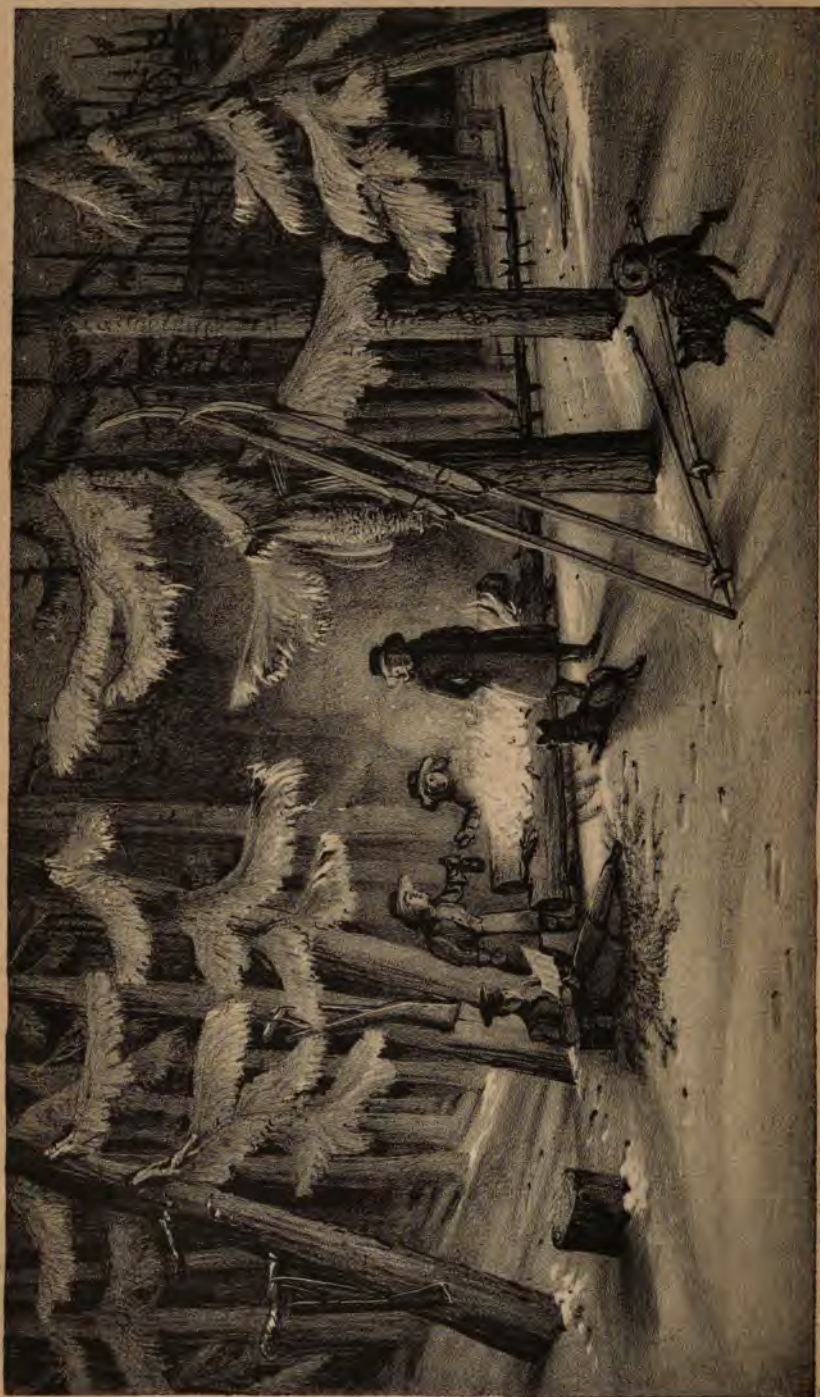
but by means of two pieces of wood, of about the thickness of a man's arm, placed transversely, we kept them a little apart from each other; prior to elevating the log on to the prostrate tree, we jagged the edge of either of them that were to come in contact, that they might ignite the better.

The uppermost log was without support; to prevent it, therefore, from falling during the night, which might have been attended with very awkward results, a small pine, with its thinner end resting on the ground, was placed across it, at about an angle of forty-five; the weight of this kept all steady, and guarded against the possibility of accident. To make assurance doubly sure, indeed, we sometimes fastened this tree, or stay, as a sailor would call it, in its proper position with a wooden pin.

Whilst this was going on, one or more of the party was occupied in removing and trampling down the snow on either side of the logs; and in strewing the space thus in a manner cleared, with an abundance of pine branches, they placed others of these at the back of our bivouac, which served as well for pillows, as to protect us, in some degree, from the wind and weather.

Bundles of lighted sticks were now introduced between the logs; a space of two or three inches, as I have remarked, having been left for that pur-





Drawn on Stone by T. M. Dwyer

A NIGHT BIVOUCAC .

Printed by C. Hallenbeck

pose, so that in the course of a short time, we had a most comfortable fire.

Our knapsacks were now put in requisition; and as our rifles had produced us, on our way to the ring, a bird or two, we were enabled, though with very rude cookery, to enjoy a comfortable repast. On this, as on many similar occasions, I had a small coffee-pot along with me. I used to think a cup of that delicious beverage a greater luxury after exercise than the finest viands.

When our meal was finished, pipes were produced, and as by this time the people were in some degree recovered from their fatigues, the laugh, the joke, the song, and the brandy-bottle, went round.

The accompanying print will give a good idea of our bivouac on this as on similar occasions.

After the lapse of an hour or two, when our drowsy eyelids told us it was bed-time, we reclined on our couch, and resigned ourselves into the arms of Morpheus.

When I first visited Scandinavia, I sometimes carried a light blanket when on any little expedition into the forest; but, from finding this a great incumbrance, and that I could manage very well without it, I subsequently seldom took it along with me. On this particular occasion I little needed it, as the weather was moderate, the

quicksilver being only four or five degrees below zero.

The night was very fine, and the stars shone with great brilliancy. In the Northern parts of Scandinavia, indeed, those luminaries and the moon oftentimes shine with so much lustre, that, together with the reflection from the snow, a person is enabled, even in the depth of winter, to read the smallest print at midnight.

Though it took us about an hour to prepare our quarters, when once completed, all trouble was at an end; for, instead of having to watch and replenish the fire continually, as would have been the case if it had been got up in the common manner, from the thickness of the logs, and the consequent slow action of the fire, the wood continued burning, and even throwing out a great additional degree of heat during the whole of the night. This was not the only advantage; for, owing to the fire being a little elevated from the ground, an equal degree of warmth was distributed over the whole body.

This plan of bivouacking was the most admirable I ever saw; for if the situation was sheltered, a person seldom suffers to any very serious extent from the cold. I speak this from some experience, as at different times I have lain in the forest when the temperature has been rather severe.

Wind, or a snow-storm, are the evils to be

dreaded ; for in such cases a person can only partially protect himself from the effects of either one or the other.

After being very warm, I have felt the cold to some extent, when I have thus had to quarter on the snow. I remember once I was so much heated after a severe chase, that when we got up a fire, soon after dark, my clothes were nearly as wet as if I had been in a pond ; so much so, indeed, that in unbuttoning my coat, the back part of it immediately froze into a sheet of ice. The quicksilver was then twenty-two degrees below zero, or fifty-four beneath the point of congelation. I had, however, no other canopy for the night than the starry vault of heaven, and no other covering than my usual clothes.

Though such a watch-fire, &c. as I have been describing, is got ready in less than an hour, if there be plenty of assistance, should there be only one person to prepare it, as was sometimes the case, when I have been accompanied only by Elg, the operation usually occupied two hours or more.

The size of the tree depends upon the state of the weather and the length of the night ; if the temperature be severe, and the night long, a thicker tree is of course required than if the contrary be the case.

But let the pine be of what dimensions it may, a Northern forester soon levels it with the ground.

The address with which these men use their axes is very great. Indeed, Elg assured me he once felled forty-eight timber trees in the course of a short autumnal day. The pines in Scandinavia are usually hewn at about two feet from the ground.

To proceed.—On the succeeding morning, we left our bivouac at sunrise, and proceeded to search the remainder of the ring; but we were unable to find the bear, and therefore concluded he had never been encircled.

The like ill-success attended us with the other rings of which I have spoken: indeed, though during the succeeding two or three weeks we beat various parts of the Wermeland and Dalecarlian forests, we were unable to get one of those beasts on foot. This being the case, and as we met with no occurrence of any particular interest, either of a sporting or other nature, I shall not enter into the details of our proceedings.

In the course of our rambles in the wilderness, we fell in with several packs of capercali: the snow was at this time loose under foot, and hanging in such masses in the trees, that the vision of the birds was obstructed; from these causes, we were not unfrequently enabled to approach within range of, and to bring them down with our rifles. On one occasion, an old capercali cock that I shot lodged in the branches of an immense pine, so that it was not until we had levelled the

tree with the ground, that we got possession of our prize.

We also killed a few ripa (*Tetrao Lagopus*), of which there was a sprinkling throughout the forest. These birds have all the distinguishing characteristics of the grouse genus, viz.:—the bill is like a crooked cone; there is a naked scarlet skin above each eye; and the legs are plumed.

There are two species of ripa in Scandinavia, the fjäll ripa (*Tetrao Lagopus Alpina*), and the dal ripa (*Tetrao Lagopus Subalpina*). Without entering into minute details, it may be desirable for me to say something of these birds.* I shall first speak of the former.

In the summer season the predominant colours of the fjäll ripa are speckled black, brown, or gray,

* When speaking of the ripa, Mr. Nilsson, to whose writings I am indebted for many of the following observations, simply denominates the respective kinds, as the *Lagopus Alpina*, and the *Lagopus Subalpina*, asserting that, both in regard to habits and characteristics, this bird has as much right to be ranked as a separate genus as the partridge; and that Linnæus is decidedly incorrect in classing it as of the *Tetrao* genus. I take leave, however, to differ from the Professor, for, if my memory does not deceive me, the ripa certainly assimilates in all leading particulars to birds usually classed under the grouse genus, of which I myself have shot some thousands in the British Isles. The ripa besides, has on several occasions been seen at the lek, or playing-ground, of the black cock, and a connexion, as I shall presently show, has sometimes taken place between the two birds. With the knowledge of this fact, therefore, and entertaining the impression I have just stated, I cannot but follow the beaten track, and class the ripa as of the *Tetrao* genus.

the shades varying very much, according to the season being more or less advanced ; there is, however, a very great dissimilarity in the dress of the male and female ; the former being of a much darker colour than the latter. But in the winter time its plumage, with the exception of the tail feathers, which are at all times black, tipped with white, is entirely white. The length of the male is from thirteen to fourteen inches, and the breadth across the wings about twenty-four inches.

Professor Nilsson considers the Scandinavian fjäll ripa to be the same bird described by Fabius as common to Iceland. In regard to size and habits it nearly assimilates to our ptarmigans ; but never having seen the latter in their summer plumage, I am not prepared to pass a decided opinion on the subject.

The fjäll ripa is to be found in all the more northern parts of Scandinavia, as well on the continent as on the adjacent islands. Their usual resort are the fjälls, or lofty mountains, as I have more than once said, whose summits are destitute of trees ; but during heavy snow-storms these birds not unfrequently fall down into the lower country. This has occasionally happened in some of the Norwegian valleys, at which times they have been seen perched in such numbers in the birch-trees, that the latter seemed to be altogether clothed in white.

Like several other birds of the grouse genus,

the fjäll ripa pairs. The hen makes her nest among stones, or upon the stones themselves, and lays from ten to twelve eggs. Whilst she is sitting, the male is constantly in the vicinity of the nest; but as soon as the chicks are out of the shell, which is not until July, it is said he deserts both the mother and the brood, and, repairing to the higher part of the fjälls, he joins other males similarly circumstanced to himself. Thirty or forty cocks may thus occasionally be seen congregated together. At such times they are said to be much on their guard, and to be difficult of approach. In the month of August, however, when the young are pretty well fledged, the old hen takes them likewise to the more elevated ranges, when the brood is once more joined by the cock. This separation, if true, is a singular circumstance.

During the autumnal months, these single families of ripa roam alone over the fjälls; but on the approach of winter they pack, and at that inclement period they may often be seen assembled in very considerable numbers. These birds are less shy in still and warm weather, than during storms of wind and snow; they are also much more easy of approach when single, or in broods, than when they are packed. In hard blowing weather they are mostly to be found on the leeward side of the fjälls.

In the summer-time, the fjäll ripa feeds for the most part on leaves, flowers, and the seeds of

plants indigenous to the elevated region he frequents; the young subsist principally on insects. In the winter-time, their food chiefly consists of seeds and buds. Its flesh is said to be inferior in flavour to that of the dal ripa.

The fjäll ripa flies with remarkable velocity; even hawks, which are among the swiftest of birds, have not always the easiest task in catching them. On these occasions, indeed, instinct teaches the ripa to soar aloft so as to keep above his opponent, and he sometimes rises so high in the air, that both the hawk and himself are lost to the eye of the spectator. The hawk is said to commit dreadful destruction among these birds.

The dal ripa, independently of being somewhat larger than the fjäll ripa, differs in many respects, as well in regard to plumage as habits, from that bird. During the summer, the neck and breast of the male is of a reddish brown; the back dark brown; the belly, the outer part of the wings, and legs, white. The female is beautifully speckled nearly all over the body, the predominant colours being black, brown, and gray; the coverts of the wings and the legs whitish. As is the case with the fjäll ripa, however, the colour of this bird varies much according to the season being more or less advanced. In winter, with the exception of the tail feathers, which, as with the fjäll ripa, are at all times black, tipped with white, both male and female become quite white. The length of

the male is from fifteen to fifteen and a half inches ; the breadth across the wings from twenty-five to twenty-six inches. The female is somewhat smaller.

The dal ripa is to be found in all the Northern parts of Scandinavia, as well on the mainland, as on the adjacent islands. I have reason to believe, that some few of those birds bred within less than twenty miles to the northward of my quarters, which were situated in about the 60th degree of latitude. In the summer season I never saw any in the vicinity of Lapp-cottage, though in the winter-time, as I have said, a few were to be met with thereabout. I imagine, however, that in Sweden at least, the ripa is not often seen, even during the latter period of the year, much farther to the southward, than the latitude I have just named.

The usual resort of the fjäll ripa is, as I have said, barren and lofty mountains, whose summits are destitute of trees ; but the dal ripa, on the contrary, is only to be met with within the range of arborous vegetation. Though this bird is to be found all over the forest, his favourite resorts, particularly in the breeding season, would seem to be at a very considerable height on the sides of the fjälls. Even in that elevated region,* where

* Mr. Nilsson divides the fjäll districts into four regions, viz ; 1st, The Snow region, (*Regio Nivalis*,) extending from the summits of the mountain to the verge of arborous vegetation ;—2nd,

only the dwarf willow, (*Sw. Videbusken*,) and the dwarf birch, (*Sw. fjäll bjork*. Lat. *Betula Nana*,) flourishes, he is frequently to be met with in the summer ; but he prefers the succeeding region, in which the white birch (*Betula Abba*) appears, and forms a coppice, or low wood.

In the summer season the dal ripa feeds upon the leaves of various plants, such as the grass-willow, (*Salix herbacea*,) and several other kinds of willows, the blue-berry bush, (*Vaccinium uliginosum*,) and especially the seed-vessels and seeds of the knot-grass, or bread-wort, (*Polygonum Vipiperum*,) which latter is for that reason called in Norway rypegras, or ripa grass. In autumn and winter these birds live on buds and seeds, particularly those of the dwarf and common birch. In the spring, their food consists, for the most part, of the buds of the birch-tree. Their flesh is considered superior to that of the fjäll ripa, though inferior to that of the hjerpe, or hazel-hen.

The dal ripa is most commonly upon the ground, both during the day and night ; but it does happen, though denied by some ornithologists, that it perches upon trees. In parts of Norway, indeed, it is said, that people are in the the Willow and Dwarf Birch region, (*Salicis* and *Betula Nana* ;) —3rd, The Pine region, (*Regis pinetorum*,) and lastly, the Cultivated region. Each of these regions, the learned Professor states, has its own peculiar animals of the Mammalia family, birds and fish.

habit of shooting those birds in the night-season by torch-light, whilst roosting in the willows.

With the exception of his belly, and the outer part of his wings being white, the male dal ripa, in the summer-season, much resembles the cock grouse in outward appearance. His size, besides, is about the same, and on taking wing, he cackles* in a very similar manner. Independently, however, of dissimilarity in regard to plumage, which is the more striking in the winter; the fact of this bird only being found in wooded districts, and of its perching in trees, distinctly marks it in my mind as a variety from the *Tetrao Scotius*, or red game, common to Great Britain.

Though I have traversed Scandinavia in almost every direction, and though I have made many inquiries on the subject, I have never seen that bird, nor have I reason to believe he is to be found in that peninsula. It has been asserted by travellers, I am aware, that such is the fact; but I am much inclined to think that they have come to that conclusion, from seeing the male dal ripa in his summer plumage.

* His cry on these occasions is *errackack-kack-ah-kah*. When he alights it is *kāvūh-kāvāugh*. The Finlanden peasants imagine they hear in this sound the word *copek*, *copek*, for which reason they jestingly call the ripa *Copek*, a coin, as it is well-known, in common circulation in Russia. Those of Guldbrandsdal, in Norway, suppose the ripa cries *Tå Kårn*, or catch the fellow; and those of Hallingdal, that he says *Kå bår dū*, *Kå bår dū*, or what is it you carry?

The dal ripa, like the fjäll ripa, pairs. The hen makes her nest under the shelter of a bush, or among heather, and lays from ten to twelve eggs. Whilst she is sitting, the male constantly remains in the vicinity, and defends his mate in the most courageous manner against the attacks of birds and beasts of prey. Mr. Nilsson, indeed, says, that he himself once saw the cock-bird entice a fox away from the nest, by his cries and artifices. The male also shows great regard for his offspring, for instead of deserting the chicks immediately after they are hatched, as is said to be the case with the fjäll ripa, he keeps constantly with the brood.

Towards the approach of winter, the dal ripa, like the fjäll ripa, commonly pack, and during that season they may often be seen together in considerable numbers.

The dal ripa, as I have just now stated in a note, breeds occasionally with the black game. The produce are called in Scandinavia *Ripp-orre*. These mules are very scarce—I never saw one; but five specimens, all very nearly resembling each other, have been submitted to Mr. Nilsson's inspection. A mere glance at them, the Professor observes, will at once convince a person that they are a combination of the ripa and the black-cock.

The ripa is killed in Scandinavia by a variety of means. Some are shot, but by far the greater part are taken in snares of various constructions.

It is said to be by no means unusual in the more northern parts of that peninsula, for a peasant to set five hundred or a thousand of the latter, for the capture of those birds. It is principally the dal ripa, however, that is thus taken. Numbers are of course caught, and as this is usually in the winter season, they are kept in a frozen state until the arrival of dealers, who make it a trade to purchase up game, for the supply of the Stockholm, and other markets. They are sometimes conveyed as far as Copenhagen. In good years, it is said not to be unusual for a single dealer to purchase and dispose of fifty or sixty thousand ripas in the course of the season.

As is the case with several other birds common to Scandinavia, a good many ripa are killed at the period of incubation. By imitating the call of the hen at an early hour in the morning, it is not difficult to bring the cock within range of shot. It is said, indeed, that he has been actually known to perch on the back of the person who has thus enticed him.

Though during our rambles at the time of which I speak, we occasionally fell in with the ripa in the very wilds of the forest, we more generally met with those birds in the vicinity of lakes and rivers, where they resorted at this period of the year for the sake of feeding upon the buds of the birch and willow, which trees abound most in such situations. But having other objects

in view at this time, I made no point of looking after them, or otherwise it is probable I might have met with very tolerable sport. Elg, indeed, assured me, that even in this deeply-wooded line of country, he has picked up nine or ten of those birds with his rifle in a day. Hereabouts, however, they were comparatively scarce, there being probably ten to one in the more northern parts of Scandinavia. This may be imagined from the statement of Captain Brooke, who says, that in the parish of Koutokeino, in Lapland, alone, which, by the by, is of an enormous extent. Sixty thousand ripa were killed during the preceding winter to his visiting that part of the country. The manner of ascertaining the number was somewhat curious; it was not from actual calculation, but from the weight of their feathers; the covering of each ripa being supposed to weigh about one ounce.

Though I never shot regularly upon the fjälls, or in their vicinity, in the autumn, from the number of ripa that I have seen whilst traversing those wild tracts in the summer, I have no doubt but that admirable sport is obtainable. The country is so favourable for marking, and the cover in places so good, that with well-trained dogs, I can imagine a man who can hold his gun straight, might readily load a horse with those birds in the course of a day's shooting. In these desolate regions besides, plover of several different kinds are very

abundant, and forty or fifty might easily be bagged in a few hours.

In the winter season, the best time to shoot the ripa, whether in the forest or in the fjälls, is immediately after a fall of snow. If a person then meets with his tracks, it is not difficult quickly to come up with him; and one besides moves with so much silence, that he cannot hear one's approach. This is not always the case at other times, for independently of there often being a partial crust on the snow, the traces of that bird on the latter are frequently so numerous, that it requires the eye of an experienced sportsman to make out the proper one with any thing like facility.

To proceed.—At one time we visited Malung. On our way to this place we crossed, on our skidor, a very wild and savage range of country for a distance of between twenty and thirty miles, without seeing a habitation, or a human being.

At this place, one of my people got so gloriously tipsy, as to cause him to conduct himself in a most outrageous manner. I was necessitated to report his conduct, therefore, to the judge of the district, a court of justice (Ting) being at that time sitting, who ordered him to be severely punished. Though the sentence was not in reality carried into force, in consequence of the contrition the man displayed, it had the effect of frightening him almost out of his wits.

In the course of our expedition, we occasionally

suffered a little hardship, either from the severity of the weather, snow-storms, or indifferent quarters. Sometimes we sheltered ourselves at the cottage of a peasant, if we happened to meet with such in the forest ; and at others we bivouacked upon the snow.

CHAPTER XIX.

Journey to Dyngsjö ; thence to Aspberg.

ON Monday the 10th of March, intelligence was brought to me at Lapp-cottage, that a large bear (all those animals being monsters, in regard to size, in the estimation of the peasants,) was safely ringed at Aspberg, a Finnish settlement at about ninety miles to the north-west of my quarters.

As we, however, had vague intelligence of another of those animals at Dyngsjö, the hamlet of which I have more than once spoken, which from circumstances it was desirable to see after in the first instance, I despatched Elg in the course of the afternoon to that place. I gave him instructions, that if he found such report to be correct, there to await my arrival, on the following evening ; but if the contrary should be the case, that he should at once head back to Lapp-cottage, and thus save me an unnecessary journey.

On the afternoon of the following day therefore, Tuesday, 11th March, not having heard

from Elg, I set off in my sledge for the same destination. In this instance, instead of keeping to the high road, as had been the case during the preceding summer, when on my way to the skull at Dalecarlia, I held to the winter-vägen, or winter-way; this, which was much less circuitous than the former, passed in the immediate vicinity of Geijersholm and Gustafsfors, two of the forges belonging to the Uddeholm Company. As the route in places was very indifferent, and the night dark, I did not reach Dyngsjö until nine in the evening.

Here I learnt, to my mortification, that the report of a bear being ringed was altogether without foundation; and that Elg had only preceded me to that place by about a couple of hours. The poor fellow had been unable to procure a horse during the preceding night, and he was therefore necessitated to make the best of his way on his skidor: from not knowing the country, however, he had taken the wrong track, and lost himself in the forest, and in consequence had wandered many miles out of the right road.

This was unfortunate, for, had he arrived at Dyngsjö at an early hour in the morning, as I fully anticipated would have been the case, on finding the report we had heard to be incorrect, he would have had time to return to Lapp-cottage, and thus would have saved me a useless and trou-

blesome journey. There was now no help for it, and we had therefore only to make the best of our way to Aspberg; where, as I have said, we had intelligence of a bear.

We had the choice of two roads to that hamlet: the one by the way of Malung, in Dalecarlia; for at Forss, the first post-station to the northward of that place, there is a practicable and much frequented track in the winter-time, directly across the forest into Wermeland; the other, by heading back the way he came, and thus getting on to the line of the Klar. As there was a difficulty, however, in obtaining a horse to carry us to Malung, and as, besides, there was said to be a good deal of snow on the track between Dyngsjö and that place, we decided upon taking the latter route.

On the following morning, therefore, Wednesday the 12th of March, when the weather was fine, we retraced our steps as far as Gustafsfors, then at near fourteen miles distance. From thence, and after being delayed near three hours to procure a fresh horse, we set out for Näs, the hamlet situated upon the Klar, at about ten miles to the northward of my quarter.

On this occasion, we did not take the regular route, which would have carried us back, in the first instance, almost to Lapp-cottage, and, in consequence, would have been very circuitous; but we benefited by a track made use of by the pea-

sants during the winter, for the purpose of conveying coke to the forge at Gustafsfors, that led us almost a direct line across the forest.

Though the distance to Näs was not more than fourteen miles, the track was in so wretched a state, that it was long after nightfall before we reached that place.

From hence we proceeded to Fästnas, the nearest post-station to the northward, a distance of about eight or nine miles ; but on the way, owing to its swerving to one side, our sledge passed over the foot of my dog Hector, who, along with two others, was fastened to the after-part, and crushed it most dreadfully. This, as I shall by and by have occasion to show, was the greatest of misfortunes that could have happened to us. Though contrary to our original intention, we were now necessitated to pass the night at Fästnas, that we might dress the poor animal's wound, and render him such other assistance as he stood in need of. Here I met with a comfortable room ; and, what was better, the peasants were remarkably civil and obliging.

On the succeeding morning, Thursday the 13th of March, which was mild, we proceeded on our journey ; but as Hector's foot was most cruelly injured, and, from its then state, I thought he would never have recovered the proper use of it, we were necessitated to leave him behind us.

Our route, which principally lay along the

Klar, was, at this time, in very tolerable order for sledging. Though we had no förebud, we met with little delay in obtaining horses, and, in consequence, we got on pretty expeditiously. About the middle of the day we reached Likenäs, a rather large hamlet in the parish of Dalby. Here resided the brother of the man who had the bear ringed near to Aspberg, and who, by previous agreement, was to accompany us to that place.

Here we dined ; when, after a delay of about a couple of hours, during which our new companion was making some needful preparations for the journey, we again set forward. The mountains on either side of the Klar, along whose bed our route principally lay, now rose to a very considerable altitude on either hand, and the landscape, in consequence, assumed a much bolder and imposing aspect.

Towards evening, and a little before we reached Sysselbäck, our peasant, who was following in his own sledge, at some little distance in the rear, fell in with a wolf. The animal approached so near, that had he been provided with fire-arms, he could easily have killed him. Elg and myself, however, were not fortunate enough to see the beast, or we might probably have given a good account of him, as we had two rifles, and my double gun lying ready loaded in our vehicle.

At Sysselbäck, which is situated at about four-

teen miles to the northward of Likenäs, the carriage-road to the northward terminates. From hence upwards there is only a bridle-way. In the winter-time, nevertheless, the traveller may proceed in his sledge by a well-beaten track, in a very direct line to Rörås in Norway; and subsequently, if he pleases, to the very confines of that kingdom.

From Sysselebäck, where we procured a fresh horse, we proceeded for Bätsta, then at about fourteen miles distance. Our route to this hamlet lay much along the Klar. As it was nearly dark when we started, and as a heavy snow-storm came on shortly afterwards, the track, in places, was hardly perceptible, and we found a difficulty in making out our way. It was a matter, besides, of some danger; for in this part of the Klar, as I have said, there are very numerous rapids: many of these were only partially frozen over, so that it not unfrequently happened that we were driving immediately near to the open water. It was from like causes that the nine unfortunate persons, formerly alluded to, — and there might have been others whose death I did not hear of, — met with a watery grave in the early part of the winter, in this stream.

Finding, therefore, that our progress was very slow, one or other of us being often obliged to walk a little ahead of the horse, that we might not lose the track; and thinking it useless to run

farther unnecessary risks, we gave up our previous intention of proceeding to Bätsta, and stopped for the night at Tjärbackstrand, a small hamlet situated on the banks of the river.

The peasant with whom we took up our quarters was in rather affluent circumstances ; and, as I got a snug room, I found myself pretty comfortable. He himself, however, was at that time absent on a little trading expedition into Norway.

At no great distance from this place, a stream called the Tösan, which has its rise in the mountains to the eastward, falls into the Klar. Near to its confluence with that river, there is a fine and picturesque waterfall called Diggerfall: the perpendicular height of the descent is said to be sixty-three feet. It is romantically situated in the wilds of the forest, and is perhaps worth the attention of the traveller. Though not to be compared to what may be met with in many streams in the mountainous districts of Norway, Diggerfall, which I visited on a former occasion, is at all events the finest waterfall in all that part of the country.

The next morning, Friday the 14th of March, we resumed our journey ; but, owing to the new fallen snow, the track was so heavy, that we got on at little better than a footpace. Our route, as heretofore, lay partly along the Klar, and partly on land ; as we advanced to the northward, the scenery assumed a still bolder and more pictu-

resque character. After we had proceeded about five miles, we reached Bätsta.

This hamlet I have already made mention of, when describing one of my fishing excursions: it consisted of only four or five families, all of whom were the descendants of Fins. As there was a posthouse at this place, we procured a fresh horse, and then set off for Aspberg, from which we were at only about fourteen miles distance.

About three miles after leaving Bätsta we came to Höljeos, another small Finnish settlement. Here we fell in with the brother of our peasant, the very man who had encircled the bear of which we had come in pursuit. We were now very happy to learn from him that the animal was still safe within the ring, as it had been reported to us on the way that he had been recently killed.

This story originated in consequence of a bear having been shot in the vicinity of Aspberg, a few weeks previously. A large party of both Swedes and Norwegians, amounting at one time to twelve or thirteen, (our informant among the rest,) had been engaged in the pursuit of this animal; but it was not until after the lapse of three weeks that they succeeded in putting an end to him. The long continuance of this *chasse*, which was conducted on skidor, was said to have been owing to the want of a good dog, and to the loose and unfavourable state of the snow. This

beast, which was described to have been of a small size, had originally been started in Norway.

We learnt farther from this man, that the bear he himself had ringed was at less than two miles from Aspberg ; the animal, in fact, was lying very near to the track which led from Höljeos to that place. This beast, which he described as of an immense size, he had accidentally started some weeks previously from its winter-quarters, when he was in the forest for the purpose of shooting hazel-hens.

Some little distance after passing Höljeos, both brothers being then along with us, we bade adieu to our old friend the Klar, whose course we had kept for so long a distance, and striking into the forest in a north-westerly direction, proceeded by a tolerably good track, leading principally over morasses, the surface of lakes, &c. for Aspberg. Owing to our making some delay, however, for the purpose of reconnoitring the ring, we did not reach that place until the evening was well advanced.

The village of Aspberg was situated near to the summit of a hill of considerable elevation, and at a very short distance from the Norwegian frontier. The country thereabouts was mountainous, and deeply covered with pine forests; the scenery was bold, and of a picturesque character.

It was a considerable hamlet, consisting, it was said, of sixteen or seventeen families. These were all descendants of Fins ; and though several generations had passed away since their ancestors first colonized at that place, many of the people, in addition to Swedish, spoke the Finnish language : some, indeed, it was said, were more conversant with the latter than with the former tongue.

Aspberg was in the parish of Dalby ; it was about thirty-five miles, however, from the church of that name. The inhabitants found this distance not a little inconvenient, as from the badness of the roads, &c. a journey to their place of worship not unfrequently occupied nearly a week. This evil will soon be remedied, for a church is at this time building at Höljeos, for the accommodation of the population, which has been greatly on the increase within the last few years, of the surrounding districts.

On the river Hölje, and at only a short distance from Aspberg, there is a fine waterfall ; the height of the descent is said to be considerable. But I am ashamed to say that I was too indolent to pay it a visit.

Hereabout, as was the case throughout all this part of the country, the peasantry ran capitally upon skidor. This was the less to be wondered at, as, owing to the want of roads for many months in the year, they had little other means of communicating with their neighbours, or of car-

rying on their necessary avocations in the forest, or elsewhere.

The inhabitants of Aspberg, as at many other Finnish settlements in the Northern forests, had their *skidor backe*, or skidor-hill. On Sunday afternoon, or other holidays, the people both old and young, male and female, might here be seen congregated in considerable numbers, amusing themselves with gliding down the declivity. As this hill, however, independently of inequalities, was rather precipitous, it required both management and skill to make the descent properly. Children of a very tender age were not unfrequently thus occupied. This constant practice from infancy naturally makes the peasants proficient in the use of their skidor.

At Aspberg, we took up our quarters with the father of our peasants, a fine old man of about seventy years of age: as I got a tolerable room to myself, and as I was provided with my blankets, sheets, &c. I had little to complain of, in regard to accommodation.

My host, as seemed indeed to be generally the case with the peasants hereabout, was in comfortable circumstances; though his farm probably produced less grain than was required for the consumption of his household, he was tolerably rich in cattle; as a proof of this, he numbered thirteen cows in full milk at this very time; and he had a proportionate stock of sheep, goats, &c.

CHAPTER XX.

Aspberg Bear.

A LITTLE before sunrise, on the succeeding morning, Saturday the 15th of March, the weather being delightfully fine, we set out on our skidor to attack the bear, of which we had come so far in pursuit. This was ringed at the foot of a range of rather lofty hills, situated to the south-east of Aspberg.

There were four of us on this occasion: Elg and myself, and the two peasants who had accompanied us to that place on the preceding evening. Neither of the latter, by my desire, were armed with any thing besides their axes.—We took Paijas along with us.

In all this part of the country, the ground was covered with snow to the depth of about four feet. A great part of this had fallen in the early part of the winter. From having been so long upon the ground, it had attained a much greater degree of consistency than was the case farther to the southward, and in consequence was in very

tolerable order for our skidor. In point of fact, indeed, instead of the latter being buried for a foot or more in the snow, at almost every step we took, as was generally the case during our recent expedition into Dalecarlia, they now only sank a very few inches below its surface.

Though the snow was in a rather favourable state as regarded ourselves, its surface had not obtained that compactness to support the weight of such an animal as a bear. For this reason, we thought it probable that, were we to succeed in rousing the beast, even though we were not fortunate enough to destroy him in his den, we might eventually be able to come up with him by means of our dog and skidor.

As we were careless, nevertheless, of throwing away a chance, when we reached the ring, which was of no very considerable extent, we thought it best in the first instance to search it in our usual silent manner; we thus hoped to be enabled to steal upon the bear before he had the opportunity of leaving his winter quarters.

Owing to the depth of the snow, which made us apprehensive of passing over the animal, we on this occasion so far deviated from our common plan, as to slip Pajjas from his couplings.

We were the less apprehensive of adopting this step, as we were very certain the dog would not range far ahead, for the reasons I have already given; we besides entertained great hopes that,

even if he should be the first to come upon the bear, the beast would not leave the den until we had time to get up to the spot. This was more likely to be the case from the quantity of snow that was then upon the ground, as at such times these animals usually lie much closer than at others.

I now ordered Elg to keep at four or five paces to my right, and the peasants to follow in our tracks; thus, for several hours, we beat the most tangled brakes within the ring: but we could not succeed in meeting with the object of our search.

At between twelve and one o'clock therefore we halted, when, spreading the contents of our kit upon the ground, we regaled ourselves upon such homely viands as it contained; and these we enjoyed with the greater relish, from our walk having given us a good appetite. Here we rested for about an hour and half, and then resumed the search, in the same manner as before.

Nearly up to this period the snow had been in very tolerable order for our skidor; but from the day being rather mild and bright, such parts of its surface as were exposed to the rays of the sun had now become partially thawed, and, in consequence, it fastened in such masses upon those implements, that we could no longer move with any thing like facility. Instead, therefore, of the gliding kind of movement with which the action of the skidor is usually accompanied, we were

now obliged either wholly or partially to lift them from the ground at almost every step. In addition to this, we were necessitated to strike them continually with the sticks we carried in our hands, that the sudden jar might shake off the snow that was adhering to them.

This being the case, we should have acted wisely if we had given up all farther search for that day ; for, unless we were fortunate enough to kill the bear in his den, there was little or no chance, if he was once on foot, of our being able to come up with him. As however we had at this time gone over near two-thirds of the ring, we began to be apprehensive that the animal might not be within it : to ascertain that point, therefore, we determined to beat out the remainder.

But our fears on this head were groundless ; for scarcely a quarter of an hour had elapsed, after we had finished our repast, and when we were in a very thick brake, before Paijas began to challenge ; he was a little in the rear of us, the softness of the snow hardly permitting him to get along, but he soon pushed rapidly ahead. My gun was at this time loose in my hand, and as I knew it was the bear the dog had scent of, I lost not a moment in following upon his track : but I had not taken more than a few steps, when I saw the game of which we were in quest bolt from his lair, at about fifteen paces ahead of me. I had, however, the merest glimpse possible ; so

that, before I had time to fire, he was out of my sight.

This was an unfortunate finale ; for, had the bear lain still for one or two seconds longer, I have little doubt I should have put an end to him. Indeed, had not Paijas been loose—it being his baying that disturbed the beast—I must have come right in upon his den ; this could hardly fail to happen, as he was lying in the very track I was pursuing, in a well, as it were,—the surrounding snow being upwards of four feet in depth.

As there was no help for this mishap, we lost no time in giving chase ; but the snow clinging to our skidor in the manner I have described, we were only enabled to plough our way through it with great labour and difficulty.

Had we been divested of our skates at this time, we should have sunk through the snow to the ground at every step ; but this was not the case with the bear, as, from the broad spread of his feet, he managed to tread so lightly, that he seldom penetrated more than twelve or fifteen inches beneath its surface, which was nothing to so powerful an animal as that of which we were in pursuit. The beast, however, did not proceed for any distance in a gallop, but shuffled forward at a long trot.

Under these adverse circumstances the chase proved an unsuccessful one. This being the case,

it would be little interesting were I minutely to detail the particulars: suffice it therefore to say, that in a very short time we overtook Paijas, who was our only hope, for by hearing his challenge in the distance we were enabled to make many a short cut; and that after a run of about two hours, by which time we were dead beat with the fatigue of thus wading through the snow, finding farther pursuit useless, we came to a halt.

Tired and dispirited, we now retraced our steps to Aspberg, from which we were fortunately at no great distance, owing to the bear, towards the conclusion of the chase, having made a cast in the direction of that hamlet.

Before starting in the morning, I agreed to give a few rix-dollars for all right and title to the bear, whether we killed him or not, in the event of his being within the ring. The laugh was therefore fairly against me; the beast was at large in the forest, with a very fair chance of escaping altogether, whilst my money was safe in the pocket of the peasant.

CHAPTER XXI.

Chase and death of the Aspberg bear.—Return to Aspberg.—
Entering a dog to a bear.

ON the afternoon of the succeeding day, which was beautifully fine, I sent Elg to see after our bear. He returned in the course of two or three hours, with intelligence that he had succeeded in again ringing the animal at no very considerable distance from where we had left off the pursuit on the preceding evening ; this was on the eastern face of a range of rather lofty hills lying to the eastward of Aspberg. I was pleased with this information, as I was apprehensive the beast might have betaken himself to a distant part of the country.

At five o'clock therefore, on the succeeding morning, Monday the 17th of March, the weather being fine and slightly frosty, Elg and myself set off for the new ring. On this occasion we took one of the peasants who had accompanied us on the Saturday, along with us, that he might carry a kit of provisions, and an axe, as it was uncertain

where we might have to quarter during the ensuing night. The snow was now in very tolerable order for our skidor.

We had not, however, proceeded more than a thousand paces from Aspberg, when we fell in with the fresh tracks of our bear, which had evidently been on foot during the preceding night ; these crossed the route we were pursuing, and led off in a westerly direction.

This was an untoward and unlooked-for circumstance ; but it must have arisen from Elg having approached too near to the beast, whilst he was in the act of making the ring, and thus disturbed him anew ; or that the animal was dissatisfied with his quarters, and in consequence had gone in search of others.

We now lost no time in giving chase, or rather in following up the tracks of the bear : we pursued these for full an hour and a half, and until we had reached nearly the summit of the range of hills lying to the south-westward of Aspberg ; here we came to a thick and tangled brake, where from certain indications, such as his doubling, or, in other words, proceeding in a crooked direction, we had reason to suppose the animal had taken up his quarters.

Had we thought there was the least possible chance of the attempt proving successful, we should now have endeavoured to steal upon the bear ; but, from his having been so recently dis-

turbed, we were well convinced he was far too much on his guard to allow of our approach. We deemed it best, therefore, to slip Paijas from his couplings, and with his assistance try to run the beast down on our skates; the dog now dashing into the thicket, presently gave us to understand by his challenge that the animal was on foot, and making his way to another part of the forest.

Though the snow, as I have said, was now in very tolerable order for our skidor, and we in consequence were enabled to push forward at a rather rapid pace, it was in too loose a state for the bear to proceed generally at the gallop; as on the Saturday, indeed, he could only scramble forward at a trot. Had Paijas therefore been able to keep up with him for any length of time, by hearing his challenges in the distance, and in consequence avoiding the very many sinuosities taken by the beast, we should probably soon have been enabled to cut in upon him. This, unfortunately, was far from being the case; for the gallant dog, whom two winters before I saw worry a bear for nearly eight successive hours, in which time he must have driven the animal over near thirty miles of country, was now so worn out, that in less than a quarter of an hour we not only overtook him, but left him very far in the back-ground.

We now greatly regretted Hector, whose foot the sledge had so unluckily injured. Though this dog was very inferior to Paijas in his better

days, yet from being light and active, and in consequence from not sinking much below the surface of the snow, I have little doubt that he would soon have enabled us to kill the bear. But it was no use lamenting his absence, as that little tended to help the matter.

Though we were, as I may say, without a dog, we still thought that, by persevering, we might eventually tire out the bear, and thus, at last, fairly run him down; we therefore continued to push on after his track at the very top of our speed. Had the animal now taken to an open line of forest, I dare say that, from the state of the snow, we might quickly have been up with him; but, so far from this, he held to the thickest brakes he could meet with, and to the most broken and precipitous ground; and from these causes our course was naturally much impeded.

Thus we continued the pursuit for between two or three hours; but we never even succeeded in getting a view of the bear. He made many doubles during this time, and at last returned nearly to the point whence we had started him.

We were now joined by an active young fellow named Olof Andersson, a Norwegian by birth, though a resident at Aspberg. This man, who was a capital runner upon skidor, had heard the challenges of Pajjas; and knowing previously what was going forward, he now came to be a spectator of the chase.

At this period we began to think it very problematical whether, without other assistance, we should succeed in coming up with the bear; I therefore ordered a halt, and dispatched our new associate to Aspberg, from which we were then only a few miles distance, to obtain a likely-looking, though untried, dog that I had seen at that hamlet on the preceding day.

As some time must necessarily elapse before Olof could possibly return to us, we got up a good fire; this guarded us against getting chilled, as well as enabled us to dry our clothes. Mine indeed, owing to the severe exercise we had taken, were as wet as if I had been pumped upon for half an hour. We now did ample justice to the contents of our knapsack, the run having tended not a little to give us an appetite for our breakfast.

About eleven o'clock, Olof rejoined us at our bivouac. He brought with him not only the dog, who was called Passopp, but the animal's master. This was another able-bodied young man, named Henrik; he, like Olof, resided at Aspberg, and was a first-rate runner upon skidor.

After taking a dram, as an earnest of better success, we resumed our skates, of which we had divested ourselves whilst remaining before our watch-fire, and recommenced the pursuit of the bear.

I now directed Olof and Henrik, neither of

whom were armed with guns, to follow upon the track of the beast at the very top of their speed, and at the same time to halloo continually. In the event therefore of their dog not challenging regularly to the bear, I anticipated that, by hearing their shouts in the distance, Elg and myself might be enabled to save many an angle, which would give us a very good chance of heading and coming in upon the animal. Thus I made the people perform the duty of hounds.

In this manner we proceeded for an hour or more. At last we came to an extensive and tangled brake,—an old svedgefall in fact, where the young trees had grown up so thick that it was difficult to penetrate it. At this time, Elg and myself were on the opposite or eastern side of the thicket to that of the people. Passopp now began to challenge loudly in the brake, Paijas being far in the back-ground; but, from being unacquainted with the dog, we were at first a little in doubt as to what it might be with which he had come in contact. This uncertainty was soon at an end; for the tremendous cries of the men, who were presently up to the spot, plainly told us it was the bear he had fallen in with.

As the thicket was of great extent, and in places almost impenetrable, at least to people hampered with skidor, we thought the chances of getting in upon the animal in such a situa-

tion were much against us ; instead therefore of making the attempt, we ran and posted ourselves at the northern extremity of the brake ; as, from the course the bear had previously taken, we thought it probable he would make his exit at this point.

This was a most unfortunate cast ; for, instead of facing towards us, as we had anticipated, he headed directly about, and made off to the southward. In his progress, he passed very near to a small glade in the forest where he had previously been standing, and where, if we had remained, I might very probably have succeeded in getting a shot.

We were now thrown out altogether, which we presently knew from the challenges of the dog in the distance ; nothing of course, therefore, remained for us but to follow in the direction the bear had taken, as fast as we were able. The ground happening to be pretty favourable, by pushing on at the top of our speed we were enabled to rejoin the people in less than a quarter of an hour.

These were now open-mouthed : they stated that they came close in upon the bear, whom they described as an immense fellow, when he was in the thicket. One of them, indeed, Olof, was frightened almost out of his senses. The beast, as he asserted, made a dash at him, and he, in consequence, not only bawled out most lus-

tily for assistance, but made an attempt, skidor and all, to climb up into a tree for safety. This little adventure was a standing joke against the poor fellow for a long while afterwards.

The bear, as we saw by his tracks, (for Pas-sopp, being good for little or nothing, had, by this time, come to heel,) continued to make to the southward. Thinking it not improbable, therefore, that he would face for the lower ground, Elg and myself ran down the slope of the hill, for the purpose of intercepting him: but we ordered the peasants to follow, as heretofore, upon his tracks.

This proved another unfortunate cast; for, instead of taking to the eastward, as we apprehended would have been the case, the animal made for the upper part of the mountain, and we, in consequence, were once more distanced.

To retrieve our lost ground, we had now to contend against a considerable acclivity, as well as to fight our way through a close and tangled brake. By the time we had overcome these impediments, the *chasse*, as we heard by the cries of the people, was far ahead, or rather to the right of us. Very fortunately, however, the bear, whose course had hitherto been to the south-west, shortly afterwards made a swing to the eastward: this enabled us to save an immense angle, and rapidly to gain upon the beast.

But we were a few seconds too late to do ex-

ecution, though in time to witness a very animating scene. On our rising to the brow of the hill, we viewed the bear at about one hundred and fifty paces distance, just as he had bolted out of a brake to the right of us ; when, striking into a beaten path that happened to be in the forest, and closely followed by the dog and the people, who, with tremendous shouts, were driving him forward, in the most gallant style he went down the eastern face of the hill at full gallop. I did not fire at the animal on this occasion, as, from the distance and the intervening trees, I thought it would be useless.

As Elg and myself had thus, in two instances, been thrown out, from holding to the lower ground, we determined from henceforth to keep, if possible, over the bear. Letting the people therefore follow upon his tracks,—for, plunging into a thicket, he was again quickly lost sight of, and the dog had also come to heel,—we made the best of our way along the brow of the hill.

Some little time afterwards, and in a close brake below us, Passopp, and subsequently Pajjas, (for, owing to the serpentine course the bear had taken, the old dog had been enabled to come up,) gave us to understand by their challenges they were again in with the bear. We now lost no time in taking up a position immediately near to the brake : here, I thought I must have got a

shot, as the people were driving the beast in the direction we were standing ; but I was once more disappointed, for he headed about, and, passing between the men and ourselves, again faced up the hill-side.

From the swing the bear had now taken, Elg and myself were the foremost of the party, and we therefore for a while pushed on after his tracks at the top of our speed. But having headed the dogs, who, indeed, fell back soon after the bear had left the brake, we thought it best to halt, as well that our companions might come up, which they did a few minutes afterwards, as that we might determine on our future proceedings.

We were all of us, by this time, pretty well knocked up, and one of the people was so hoarse from hallooing, that he could hardly articulate a word. I had, fortunately, a little brandy left in my flask, and this did wonders ; for, by the time we had taken a dram a-piece, we began to talk as big as ever, and still to threaten to deprive the bear of his skin before nightfall. The chances, however, were much against this result taking place, and that I well knew ; but as, unless people think they can do a thing, they seldom more than half attempt it, I encouraged them in their notion : I besides promised to reward them liberally, if they exerted themselves to the ut-

most. After the lapse of four or five minutes, we therefore again set forward, but, as I then thought, on a very forlorn hope.

As I had been so often thrown out, I now determined to pursue the tracks of the bear, for all my attempts to intercept him had hitherto proved unavailing. For a while, the animal kept, as we saw by his tracks, the brow of the mountain; but subsequently he faced directly down its eastern side, as if with the intention of making for the range of hills to the eastward, whence we had dislodged him on the Saturday.

The ground was here pretty clear of under-wood; and we were enabled to dash down the declivity at a most tremendous pace,—such a one, indeed, as the bear could not stand against; for, just before we reached the bottom of the mountain, we had the gratification to view the beast making his way through a little glade at about one hundred and thirty paces below us.

I now discharged my rifle at the animal, though, as far as I was able to judge, without effect, and immediately afterwards, my double gun, which Elg had hitherto carried in a leathern case slung across his shoulder, and which he now put into my hand; I fired both barrels of this almost as instantaneously as I could pull the triggers, and, as luck would have it,—for, to tell the truth, there was no great aim in the matter,—with much better success, for one of my balls hit the beast, as

we subsequently found, in the neck. The animal was now evidently much wounded, as we could see by the manner in which he dragged himself along. Indeed, though the distance was so considerable, we could observe his track to be deeply marked with blood.

The dogs previously to this were in our rear, but, on hearing the shots, they pushed forward to attack the bear, who, after proceeding about fifty paces, halted in a small though rather close brake: whilst in this situation, after reloading, I ran close alongside of him, when I put an end to his miseries by sending a ball through his head. Though I was immediately near to the beast when I fired, and he was still on his legs, he did not turn upon me, or offer the least resistance; indeed, he seemed to be stupified from the effect of his wound.

On the people coming up, we overhauled our prize, which proved to be a large male bear; but either owing to age, or some other cause, he was as thin as a whipping-post, and had not an ounce of fat about him.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when the bear breathed his last; and as we had started from Aspberg at five in the morning, we had been on foot for eleven hours, or rather for nine, as we spent the remaining two before our watch-fire. In that while we had generally been running at

our best pace, and therefore must have gone over very many miles of ground.

Though the day was very bright and rather mild, our skidor fortunately ran well during the whole of it. This was owing to the bear confining his movements to the eastern face of the mountain, which was sheltered from the sun: had he taken to the western side of the hills, or to other parts exposed to its rays, the snow would have adhered to those implements in the same manner as on the Saturday, and, in consequence, we should have had little chance of coming up with the beast.

It was now too late in the day, and we were all too much tired, to think of getting the bear to Aspberg that evening; leaving him therefore where he had fallen, we slowly wended our way to that place, whence we were only a few miles distance, where we arrived soon after the sun had sunk below the horizon.

On the following morning, at an early hour, the people conveyed the bear from the forest, with the assistance of a horse and sledge. He was then skinned and cut up in the usual manner. During this process, we were favoured with the company of nearly the whole of the population of the hamlet, who were pleased enough that we had ridded the vicinity of so unwelcome a neighbour.

I now witnessed a rather curious operation.

When depriving the beast of his skin, two small portions of it were allowed to remain attached to the carcass; one to the foot of the hind-leg, and the other to the haunch. The young dog Passopp, that had accompanied us on the preceding day, was then thrust headlong through the aperture formed by the carcass and the loose skin. This manœuvre, which was repeated three times, was for the purpose of *entering* him to a bear, it being the first of those animals with which he had ever come in contact. This idle custom, for which I could hear no reason assigned, is common among the Finnish chasseurs in the Wermeland forests.

CHAPTER XXII.

Norway.—Scenery.—Sneehättan.—Glaciers.—Riukanfos.—Vö-ringfos.—Act of Union.—Form of Government.—Christianiana.—Population.—Religion.—Revenue.—Trade.—Army.—Skjelöbere.—Deficiency of Grain.—Weights and Measures.—Posting.—Society.—Nobility.—Peasantry.—Game.—Game-Laws.

It would be tedious were I to detail our proceedings for the three or four succeeding days, as no occurrence of the slightest interest took place. In that while we beat a good deal of ground, in the hopes of getting a bear on foot, but, as usual, our search proved unsuccessful.

In the course of Monday, the 24th March, we crossed the line of demarcation separating Sweden from Norway, which lay at some few miles to the westward of Aspberg. It consisted of a road-way, as it were, a few paces in width, cut in a direct line through the forest; this extended, where there was wood, from the one extremity of the two kingdoms to the other. As we were distant from any habitable part of the country when

the shades of evening set in, we passed the night before a similar watch-fire to that already described.

As I am now in my bivouac within the Norwegian territories, I cannot do better than make some slight mention of that most interesting country. During this particular season, it is true, I saw little of that kingdom, but at former periods I have traversed it in almost every direction.

The general style of the scenery in Sweden is, as I have said, very beautiful, though, owing to the little elevation of the mountains, it seldom assumes grandeur of character. In Norway, on the contrary, the works of Nature are on a stupendous scale. Few countries in the world present such sublime natural scenery : its numerous lakes and rivers ; its magnificent cataracts ; its boundless forests and solitary wilds, where silence seems to brood eternally ; its terrific precipices ; its smiling valleys, and its towering Alps covered with everlasting snows, impress the mind of the traveller always with admiration, and often with awe.

The Dovrefjeld has for ages been considered the highest range of mountains in Scandinavia, or indeed in the North of Europe. It has recently been discovered, however, that the Skagstøls Tind, situated among the Sogne Alps, is of a more considerable elevation. This is said to be seven

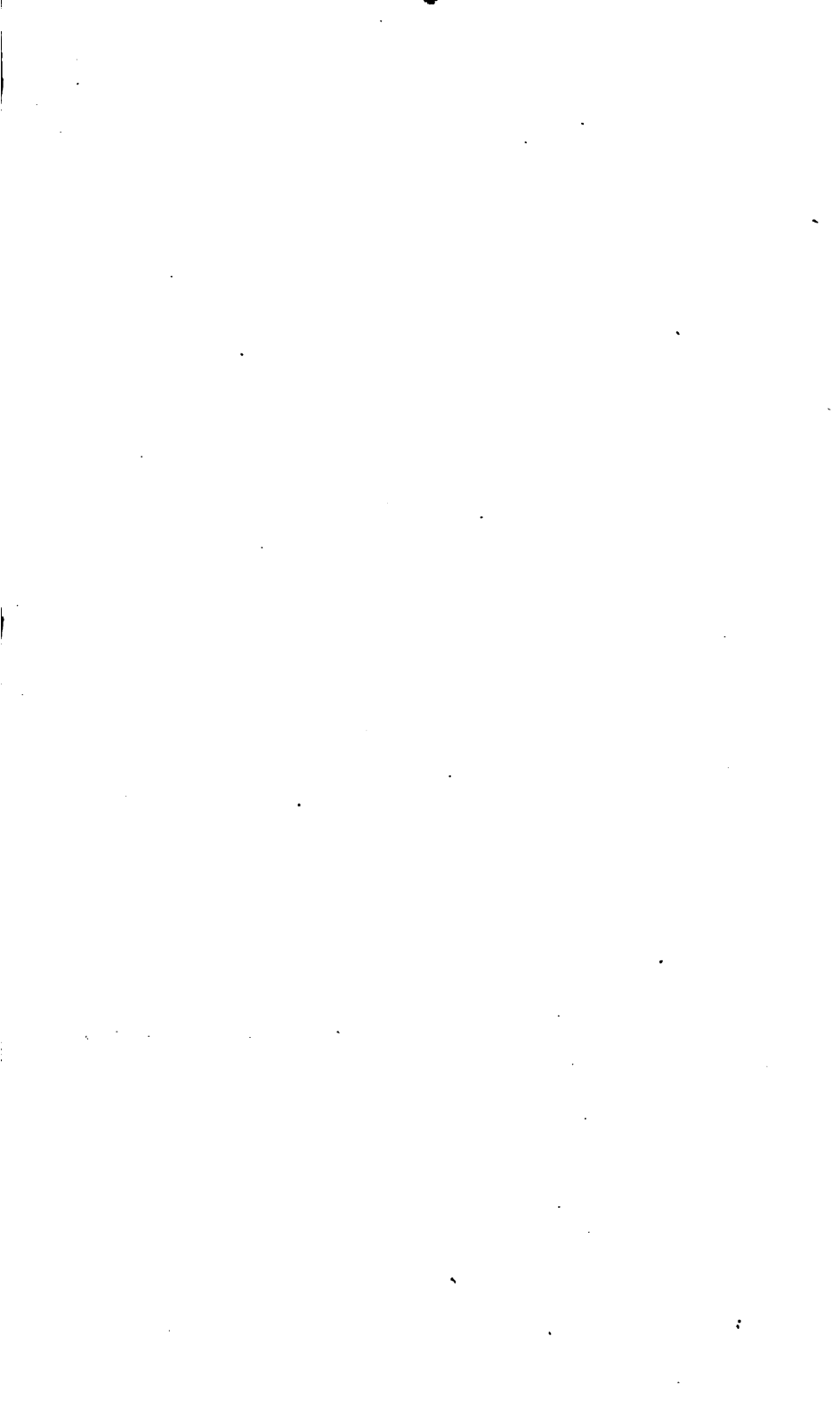
thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven feet above the level of the sea; whilst the highest point of the Dovre does not exceed seven thousand seven hundred and fourteen feet. The Skagstøls Tind is a very remarkable mountain, for, though of so considerable an altitude, it is only about fourteen miles from the ocean.

Sneehättan, or the Mountain of Snow, is the highest point of the Dovre. I was on its summit on the 8th of June, 1826. The ascent has been described by some travellers as difficult and perilous; this is not the case, as I accomplished it with perfect facility.

There was not much snow upon Sneehättan at the time of my visiting it; though in places it was lying in immensely deep masses, which had probably remained there for many ages, as during the short Northern summers the sun could not dissolve any considerable portion of it. The surface of the snow in these drifts was quite hard, so that we could walk upon it with great ease and safety. The temperature was mild on the summit of this mountain, the quicksilver being at 50, according to the scale of Fahrenheit.

There were no glaciers on Sneehättan, though such are to be found on several others of the Norwegian Alps. Justedalsbräen, or Sneebräen, as well as Folgefonden, Mr. Forssell says, are the greatest glaciers in Europe.

Sneehättan far out-tops the world of mountains





Drawn on Stone by T. M. Baynes.

Printed by C. Hullmandel.

VÖRINGSFOS.

900 feet fall.

that surrounds it. The view from the summit is sublime and magnificent, and bounded only by the horizon. The prospect, however, on the occasion I allude to, was a little interrupted by some passing clouds.

During my wanderings in Norway, I met with much splendid scenery: this was particularly the case in the wilds of Tellemache and Bergen: whilst traversing on foot those most romantic districts, I fell in with several superb waterfalls. Those of Riukanfos and Vöringfos are particularly grand.

Riukanfos, or the Smoking Fall, which is delineated in the frontispiece of this volume, is situated in Westfjoldal, in the district of Tellemache, and is four hundred and fifty feet in perpendicular height. It is near to the Goustafjeld, an isolated mountain of great beauty, whose summit is about six thousand feet above the level of the sea. The body of water at this fall is considerable, and the surrounding scenery most magnificent.

Vöringfos, which is represented in the annexed sketch, is in the Hardanger mountains, near to Eidfjord, an inlet of the North Seas, on the coast of Bergen. The body of water is here, as at Riukanfos, considerable, but the fall is much more stupendous, as it is no less than nine hundred feet in height. The rocks on either side of the descent rise so perpendicularly from the river,

that when I leant over them to see the fall beneath, my guide thought it necessary to hold me fast by the skirts of my coat. I have met with much wild scenery in my time, but so terrific an abyss as I then looked down upon, my eyes never beheld. From the place where I stood, I was at least a thousand feet from the pool below. I threw several stones down this horrible chasm; but it was a long time before they reached the water. Had I been possessed of a good stop-watch, it would have been very easy to have calculated the exact height of the fall. On this point, some difference of opinion exists; some asserting that it is upwards of one thousand, instead of nine hundred feet in height. This stupendous waterfall has not, I have reason to believe, been visited by many of our countrymen.

Vöringfos is, I apprehended, the fall alluded to by Mr. Derwent Conway, (an assumed name, I have understood,) in his travels through Sweden and Norway. That author tells us that he visited the Hardanger mountains, partly for the purpose of beholding this grand operation of nature; but his search proved unsuccessful, and he returned home without gratifying his curiosity. He consoles himself, however, by telling his readers that he believes this magnificent fall only existed in tradition. That Mr. C. should have been unable to find Vöringfos was certainly unfortunate; but it was a still greater pity that he should, in some

degree, mislead others on the subject. One indeed can hardly understand how a person, who, to use his own words, “was ready to swim at a pinch,” could have failed on making the discovery.

Mr. Forsell, in giving some statistical information regarding Norway, speaks of other stupendous waterfalls to be found in that country besides those of Riukanfos and Vöringfos, viz.

Skyttic Foss, which he states to be	700 feet in height.	
Feigums Foss, near Lyster Fjord	700	ditto.
Sevle Foss	1000	ditto.
Keel Foss, near Stalim, at the end of the Naröens Fjord	2000	ditto.

When the Union first took place between Sweden and Norway, the connexion was not very palatable to the latter kingdom. This was little to be wondered at, as, for ages, there had been constant rivalry between the two countries; but in time this feeling will doubtless wear away, as was the case between England and Scotland, where, at one period, the mutual animosities were equally great.

Norway contributes nothing towards the expense of the Swedish government beyond a trifling annual allowance to the Royal Family; but she supports all her own civil and military institutions. In acquiring Norway, Sweden has therefore obtained no additional revenue; whilst, in losing Finland, her exchequer has been de-

prived of a considerable income, and the Government, besides, of much patronage. She has, however, gained a friend instead of a bitter enemy.

Though, like many others, I am no great admirer of the manner in which the Union was brought about, the connexion between the two kingdoms is certainly a natural one. Owing to the scantiness of their several populations, it might not have been so easy for either country separately to have defended herself against aggressors ; but, united, they may bid defiance to their enemies.

Norway is governed by a Viceroy, deputed by the King of Sweden. The Storting, or States of the kingdom, meet every third year. It enjoys, as it is well known, one of the freest constitutions in the world. Christiana* is the seat of government.

This town, which contains about twenty thousand inhabitants, is beautifully situated on a fjord or inlet of the North Sea. Though it is considered as the capital of the country, Bergen, I believe, contains a greater number of people.

The population of Norway has of late years been much on the increase : at present, it contains,

* There is a capital hotel at Christiana, the Hotel du Nord, kept by Mr. Smith. It is said to be by far the best in Scandinavia, and equal, indeed, to most in the north of Europe. Considering the superiority of the accommodations, the charges are not unreasonable, which is not always the case at other establishments of the kind at Christiana, and I therefore strongly recommend it to all English travellers.

according to Forssell, upwards of one million of inhabitants. Some centuries ago, however, it was said to have been more numerous; but at that period an epidemic disorder took place, which destroyed vast numbers of people.

Lutheranism is the established religion in Norway: sectarians are tolerated; but that unfortunate race of people, the Jews, little to the credit of the government, are, as I have said, altogether excluded from the country.

The Norwegian finances are in a highly flourishing state:—the revenue has much increased within the last few years.

The Bank of Norway has a circulation of four millions of dollars, issued chiefly on mortgages, and a reserve of two millions in treasure. Its notes are paid in silver, at the rate of one hundred and thirty-five dollars paper, for one hundred dollars coin.

The trade of Norway is considerable; but it has been much injured, owing to the restrictive laws of this country.

The present scale of duties upon foreign timber imported into Great Britain is unjust to Sweden and Norway, because from the system adopted in levying the tax, the produce of those countries is necessarily more highly taxed than that of other countries, particularly of Russia and Prussia. The most equitable mode would be, to lay the duty on deals according to their cubical contents,

as on other kinds of wood ; and the cubical contents of every cargo might be ascertained with great ease and accuracy, as they now are for the purposes of freight. If the Custom-house officers should find this plan objectionable, a scale more just than the present might easily be adopted, by which the shorter lengths would not be charged with such high duties, in comparison with those that are payable upon the larger deals. This will appear evident from the following statement :—

THE ENGLISH DUTIES ON DEALS AND TIMBER FROM THE
NORTH OF EUROPE.

	£	s.	d.
120 Deals, not exceeding $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in thickness, and not less than 6 feet long, pay, without regard to their width above 7 inches	6	0	0
120 Deals, not exceeding $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in thickness, and from 6 to 16 feet long, pay, without regard to their width above 7 inches	19	0	0
120 Deals, not exceeding $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in thickness, and from 16 to 21 feet long, pay, without regard to their width above 7 inches	22	0	0
1 Load (50 cubic feet) of Fir Timber pays	2	15	0

According to this Scale of Duties,

1 Load of Wood, imported in the shape of Deals, 3 inches thick, 9 inches wide, and 8 feet long, pays	5	5	6
Do. if 3 inches thick, 9 inches wide, and 12 feet long, pays	3	10	4
Do. do. do. and $15\frac{3}{4}$ feet long, pays	2	13	0
Do. do. do. and $20\frac{3}{4}$ feet long, pays	2	7	0
Do. do. 12 inches wide, and $20\frac{3}{4}$ feet long, pays	1	15	0

The duties on a load of timber thus vary excessively, according to the length of the deals, and is almost prohibitory upon those of short lengths. They are also, in many cases, actually higher upon a load in timber than in deals, and thus operate as a premium to foreign sawyers.

It might easily be shown, for instance, from this scale, that if the price of deals in London be twenty-six pounds, (at which price Baltic deals, reduced to twelve feet in length, three inches in thickness, and nine inches in width, might have been lately purchased,) the importer of the same quantity of wood, in twenty-one feet lengths, gets a net proceed of six pounds seventeen shillings, when, in twelve feet lengths, he only receives *six shillings and threepence*. With regard to deals of less dimensions than twelve feet long and three inches thick, the disproportion is still greater.

These duties are oppressive to Norway and Sweden, because their timber, on account of its very slow growth, and the poverty of the soil in which it is produced, is not in general suitable for making deals of large dimensions. In many places where large trees may be found, it would be impracticable to convey them to a market in consequence of the great local obstacles that occur. The difficulty of procuring large timber in Sweden and Norway, is evident from the fact, that the majority of deals imported into Great

Britain from many ports in those countries, do not average more than fourteen feet, although, by the present system of duties, such an advantage is given to the importer of deals of greater lengths. In endeavouring to procure deals of even fourteen feet in length, the destruction of timber in those countries is enormous, as the short pieces are wholly useless.

Russia and Prussia produce great quantities of the large red pine-trees, and from the smooth courses of their rivers, these trees are easily transported to the Baltic. They send hundreds of cargoes, consisting chiefly of three-inch deals, twenty and twenty-one feet long, and eleven or twelve inches wide, with which the short and narrow deals from Sweden and Norway must compete, loaded with higher duties, which are not counterbalanced by the difference of freight ; for,

Firstly,—from some parts of the Scandinavian peninsula the freight is as great as from Russia and Prussia.

Secondly,—even in the more favoured parts of Scandinavia, the difference in freight cannot be estimated, on the average, at more than eight shillings the load, or about two pounds for one hundred and twenty deals of twelve feet in length, three inches in thickness, and nine inches in width, while the difference of duty is one pound, and sometimes two pounds per load, or

from five pounds to ten pounds per one hundred and twenty deals.

The difference of duty upon the American timber imported into Great Britain and upon the same quantity of European timber, according to the present scales, would annually amount to more than one million sterling, which is thus almost wholly lost to the revenue. The reason assigned for this difference of duty is principally the necessity of encouraging our colonies in North America, and of providing for the employment of our shipping and seamen. The number of seamen in the North American timber trade is about five thousand, who therefore cost the revenue about two hundred pounds each; and any benefit that may be conferred upon our colonies is dearly purchased by the inhabitants of the British islands, who are compelled to make use of bad timber from America, instead of deriving advantage from their being situated near those countries which produce some of the finest timber in the world, and which have scarcely any other means of purchasing British manufactures. The policy of encouraging Russian commerce at the expense of Scandinavia, in the present state of Europe, is difficult to be accounted for, and may be regretted when it is too late to avoid its consequences. The Swedes and Norwegians are freemen, and as such they are our natural allies. When we

consider the circumstances of their position, the similarity of their manners and religion to our own, arising from a common origin, together with their attachment to Great Britain, it is impossible not to lament the existence of any legislative measures which tend to weaken the connexion that, for the interest of both, ought to exist between them.

The scale of duties upon the import of Baltic timber into Ireland is more moderate, and is regulated upon more equitable principles than the scale which we have already examined. To the Irish scale the Swedes and Norwegians have no just cause to object. With a view to the improvement of Ireland, the duties upon Baltic timber ought, however, to be reduced. That country is dependent upon the foreign supply from its want of native timber; and the moisture of its climate renders the use of the best wood in all buildings particularly necessary. These duties operate as a serious impediment to the erection of slated houses; and thus, in many parts of Ireland, tend to place the well-disposed inhabitants, who are compelled to live in thatched cottages, at the mercy of the midnight incendiary. The trade which, previously to the imposition of those duties, flourished between Ireland and Norway, has almost wholly ceased.

The Norwegian army consists of some twelve

thousand troops of all arms. Besides these, there are about thirty thousand militia.

There are two regiments in the Norwegian service, or rather two companies belonging to each, who are trained to the use of the skidor. This description of troops must be invaluable in countries like Norway and Sweden, where the ground is covered with snow during one-half of the year.

“This corps,” says Captain Brooke, to whose very interesting work I refer the reader for farther information on the subject, “to the skate exercise unites that of the ordinary chasseurs, or light troops, of which it may be regarded as constituting a part, as it performs all their duties, differing from them only by marching on skates, which gives it a very great superiority. The *skielöbere* move with singular agility, and, from the depth of the snow, are safe from every pursuit of cavalry or infantry. On the other hand, they can attack the enemy’s columns on march, and harass them incessantly on both sides of the road, without incurring any danger to themselves. Cannon-shot would produce little effect directed against them, dispersed as they are at the distance of two or three hundred paces; and their movements are so rapid, that, at the very instant you would expect to see them a second time, they have already disappeared, to appear again in a

quarter where you are not the least aware of them.

“ The real superiority of the skielöbere, however, is chiefly shown when the enemy halts after a long march. Whatever precautions may then be taken, they are in constant danger from troops which have no occasion for path or road, and traverse with indifference marshes, lakes, rivers, and mountains; even in those parts where the ice is too feeble to bear the weight of a man, the skielöbere glides safely over by the mere rapidity of his motion. No corps, therefore, can be so proper to reconnoitre in winter, to give information of the movement of an enemy, and to perform, in fact, the functions of a courier.

“ Their provisions and baggage are transported on light wooden sledges, (*skie kjelke*,) which one man alone draws with ease, by the help of a leathern strap passing over the right shoulder. These are also extremely serviceable in conveying such as may have been severely wounded.

“ The Norwegian skielöbere have on many occasions been extremely serviceable, in former campaigns, in preserving the communications between distant corps, in surprising small detachments of the enemy, and harassing their march, whether when advancing or retreating.

“ Many instances are related of the astonishing speed with which the skielöbere have forwarded intelligence from one part of the country

to another. One in particular has been recorded. When the Swedish monarch, Charles the Twelfth, was shot during the siege of Frederickshall, in Norway, and messengers were to be sent with the intelligence to different parts of the kingdom, some skielöbere, which were with the army, volunteered to run on skeis (skidor) to Drontheim, a distance of more than four hundred English miles, and they reached that place twelve hours before a messenger despatched at the same time, and who had used the greatest possible expedition."

The army is at the disposal of the King, as far as its services can be rendered available in Scandinavia; it cannot, however, be sent out of that peninsula without special permission of the Storting. The King has the nomination of the superior officers of the army, as well as to some few of the first civil officers under the Government; the others rest with the Storting.

Norway does not at present produce a sufficiency of corn for her consumption; she is consequently obliged to import considerable quantities. This is partly owing, it is said, to the former policy of Denmark, which, being anxious to keep that part of Scandinavia more dependent upon herself, rather discouraged, than the contrary, the production of a greater supply of grain. I was happy to hear, however, from several very intelligent Norwegians, that the inconvenience is felt

less and less every year ; as, owing to the quantity of fresh ground that is annually brought into cultivation, together with the improved system of agriculture, the importation of corn gradually decreases. The like evil, as I have said, formerly existed in Sweden ; but now, instead of importing, that kingdom annually exports a considerable quantity of corn. This, I hope and trust, may at some future day be the case with Norway.

The Norwegian weights and measures are the same as the Danish : 100 Norwegian pounds are equal to 112 pounds avoirdupoise ; $30\frac{3}{23}$ Norwegian feet are equal to 31 English feet ; 36,000 Norwegian feet are equal to a Norwegian mile ; a Norwegian mile is equal to seven miles and nearly eighty yards English ; the Norwegian maaling is equal to $1176\frac{3}{4}$ square English yards ; four maalings and 133 square yards English are equal to one English acre.

Posting is rather more expensive in Norway than in Sweden. Besides this, one can never get on with any kind of comfort without a förebud. This arises from there being few or no häll or waiting-horses, excepting in the towns, at the post-stations. In the more mountainous parts of the country, the dwellings of the peasantry are much scattered, and often very distant from the post-house. From this cause, unless horses be ordered in advance, one may not unfrequently have to wait for two, three, or even four hours.

The Norwegian horses are, in general, superior to the Swedish. Entire horses are much made use of in the northern parts of the country.

The Norwegians, like the Swedes, are famed for their hospitality; a stranger, indeed, finds every door open to receive him. The manners and customs of the people are much the same in both countries. The Norwegians are passionately fond of music.

Excepting at Christiana, I saw little of society during my rambles in Norway. In that place it is on a very pleasant footing. From its being the seat of Government, a good deal of gaiety is generally going on. The Viceroy keeps up much state. Count Sandel filled that high office at the time of my visiting the capital. On one occasion, when I had the honour to dine at his Excellency's table, every thing was conducted in almost regal style.

Though the nobility are rather numerous in Sweden, this is far from being the case in Norway; indeed, at the present moment, there are only two titled families in that kingdom. The Norwegians are very democratic in their notions, for even these, by an act of Storting, will be extinct on the death of the present possessors.

Count Wedel Jarlsberg is the head of one of these families. This nobleman, who is possessed of very great talents, has acquired the universal esteem of the nation for his patriotism and devo-

tion to the service of his country. The Count is a man of large fortune. He resides much at Bogstad, a beautiful place within a few miles of Christiana. Here, together with most of our countrymen who have visited Norway, I have been most hospitably entertained on several different occasions.

The Norwegian peasantry are a very fine race of people. Their houses, which are generally built on a similar plan to those in Sweden, are usually large and comfortable. It is a common practice among them to sleep between two feather-beds.

Nearly every description of game common to Sweden is to be found in Norway. There is the elk, the stag, the reindeer, and the hare; the capercali, the black-cock, the hazel-hen, the ripa, the woodcock, the snipe, &c. I am doubtful whether the fallow-deer or the roebuck are to be met with in that kingdom. The reindeer, in a wild state, are abundant in the Dovre, Hardanger, and other lofty mountain ranges.

Excepting as regards the elk and stag, I have reason to believe no laws exist in Norway for the preservation of other descriptions of game. I subjoin some information on that subject, which was kindly furnished to me in writing by General Baron Wedel Jarlsberg, the brother of the distinguished nobleman of whom I have just spoken. I give an exact transcript of the General's letters, which were penned in the English language.

“ In reply to your inquiries of the 23rd ult. I beg to observe, that with us the chase is free, or nearly so; if not by law, at least in practice. With the exception of stags and elks, which may only be killed at a certain time of the year, and then only to a certain extent as to number, we shoot game of every description, both bird and beast, wherever we meet them, and at every season of the year, without let or hindrance. With regard to stags, the law, Christean V. book 5, chapter 10, provides:—‘ Stags may not be shot except fourteen days before St. Bartholemey, (24th August,) and fourteen days after; and every owner is only allowed to shoot two stags in the year, under a fine to the King.’ The same law farther enacts,—‘ No person is allowed to hunt or shoot stags in places where he has no lot or part in the ground, under a fine to the owner of the ground or soil, and to the King.’ The same applies to those who hunt or pursue game with dogs in other men’s woods. Bears and wolves you may kill or shoot wherever you find them; except the bear lies in his winter-quarters, when he is the property of the person on whose ground he lies.

“ From the above, it appears, that sporting with dogs on another person’s property, without permission of the owner of the soil, is not strictly legal, though it is what is practised daily; and from the great abundance of game, and the vast

extent of forests and tracts not under culture, the practice is seldom objected to. An act of the legislature of 22d June, 1824, confines the right of shooting elks to the owner of the soil where they are found, and forbids even him to shoot more than one deer every year, and that only from the 1st of July to the end of October.

“ In reply to your inquiry, under January 20th, I have no hesitation in saying, that wherever ‘stags’ are spoken of in the Norwegian game-laws, the common stag (*cervus elaphus*) is meant, and not the rein: fallow-deer and roes are not found in Norway, that I know of. Reindeer may therefore be shot without limitation as to number; but it is not quite clear to me that one would be justified in shooting them on another man’s property without permission of the owner of the soil; such permission must at all events be had before you can legally hunt them with dogs.”

CHAPTER XXIII.

Journey to Flisberg.—The Glutton.—The Rat.—Olof Mattsson.

AFTER leaving our bivouack, we struck through the country farther to the westward, but were singularly unlucky during this little expedition ; for, though we did not meet with a bear, we roused one, as we subsequently learned, from his winter-quarters. The tracks of the beast, however, were not seen until some time afterwards, when we had left that part of the country ; and as there was no one to pursue him, he went off unmolested. The reason why his footsteps had not previously been seen, was owing to that part of the forest being far distant from the haunts of men. The spot where the beast was couched was said to have been within a few hundred paces of our bivouack, and it was therefore to be presumed that we disturbed him when getting up a fire.

Though for several hours in the early part of the morning the snow was in tolerable order for our skidor, in the middle of the day it became partially melted, (such parts at least, as were ex-

posed to the rays of the sun,) and we therefore ploughed our way through it with difficulty. Towards evening, however, when it froze with some severity, and when the effects of the sun were less felt, the snow was in a much more favourable state.

At this period of the year we met with very few capercali, or rather of the males. The season was then too far advanced for us to calculate upon much sport with those birds. In the early part of the winter, as I have said, they frequent the vicinity of lakes, morasses, &c. but now they were more generally to be found singly in the recesses of the forest. Besides this, when one was fortunate enough to fall in with them, they were commonly very wild and difficult of approach.

The first part of the winter, the months of December, January, and February, are the best for capercali shooting,—more particularly as regards the pursuit of the males, for at that time the birds are not only much tamer than at a more advanced period of the season, but from the snow being loose under foot, and from the quantity hanging in the trees, their vision, as I have said, is obstructed, and it is much easier to approach them. Towards the spring, on the contrary, owing to partial thaws, or to the effects of the sun, followed up by frosts, there is frequently a crust upon the snow, so that one cannot steal towards the birds without making a noise; in

addition to this, at that time, there is usually very little snow in the trees, so that they can see for a long distance around them.

In the course of our walk, we killed a hare, which, like the rest of his species in the Northern regions at that period of the year, was entirely white.

The pursuit of hares, after a new fall of snow, is rather amusing. At that time they seldom ramble to any considerable distance; and if one therefore happens to meet with their tracks, it is easy to find them; but the country must be pretty open for the purpose. Should a person not be fortunate enough to *soho* them in their seats, by stealing silently upon their tracks, he may generally succeed, after a while, in viewing them in the distance; when, if he has a good rifle, it is not difficult to kill them. In this manner, I once shot three hares in the course of an hour or two.

Elg mentioned a rather curious circumstance regarding the hare: he proceeded early one morning to a sätterwall, for the purpose of shooting those animals; for in such situations, as has been remarked, they are very commonly found in the spring. Here he discovered five feeding upon the young grass in the immediate vicinity of each other; the whole of these he shot in succession with his rifle, not one of them attempting to run from the spot; each of the animals, however, fell quite

dead at the instant he fired, which probably accounted for the others not taking the alarm.

In the course of our ramble through the forest, we fell in with the track of a glutton, or wolverine. This was very frequently the case, as those animals are rather numerous in all the more northern districts of Scandinavia. Like the lynx, he is seldom to be seen in the vicinity of inhabited places, as he confines himself almost entirely to the wildest recesses of the forest, or to the desolate fjäll regions.

The Glutton (*Gulo Borealis*) common to that Peninsula, measures near three feet in length, exclusive of his tail, which is about six inches; his height is from a foot to a foot and a half. His predominant colour is brown; but his back is marked with a black spot, or rather streak, extending somewhat down the sides, and terminating near the tail, of a beautiful glossy appearance, which is called in Sweden the mirror. His legs are black; he retains his colour all the year round. His fur, which is not unlike that of the bear, but finer, is valuable, and is converted to many purposes.

By some it is said he is granivorous as well as carnivorous; but Swedish naturalists have their doubts whether he does not subsist wholly on animal substances. His name denotes in the German language, as well as in our own, that he is a great gormandizer. It used, indeed, to be

idly said, that when his stomach would hold no more, it was a common practice with him to lessen its dimensions, and thus make room for a farther supply, by passing his body between two trees growing in near proximity to each other. But Mr. Nilsson denies his extraordinary appetite, and says that he eats less at one time than some other beasts of prey of the same size.

He is a wild and ferocious animal, and can never be entirely tamed, even if taken quite young. His scent is remarkably fine, but his sight is dull. He climbs trees and precipices with great facility. He is slow of foot, so that a dog has not much difficulty in coming up with him ; but it is said he then emits so abominable a smell, that the latter is deterred from attacking him. Though small, he is a powerful beast, and will defend himself against a single wolf ; but if there be several of those voracious animals in company, he then takes refuge in a tree.

The glutton is very destructive ; he slaughters almost all animals, whether four-footed or winged, common to the Scandinavian wilds ; even the elk occasionally becomes his victim. Sometimes he climbs trees, or overhanging crags, and when his quarry passes underneath, he pounces upon it. At others, he steals upon his game in much the same manner as a fox. He is very destructive to the wild reindeer, particularly in the winter, for when those animals are necessitated partially to

bury their heads in the snow, for the purpose of getting access to moss and other vegetable substances lying below, he is enabled to approach them with facility. "When once seized by the blood-thirsty animal, it is in vain that the wounded deer endeavours to disengage itself from its enemy, by rushing among the trees; no force can oblige it to quit its hold: it maintains its position, and continues to suck the blood of the flying animal, till it falls down exhausted with pain and fatigue."

The glutton seeks his prey during the night, and sucks the blood of his victim before he devours the flesh. If there be more than his necessities require, he conceals the remainder of the carcass until he again becomes hungry. Professor Nilsson states, that owing to this beast being slow of foot, he does not extend his depredatory expeditions to any considerable distance: but this I think is not quite the case, because I have often seen by his tracks on the snow, that he has pursued hares, and this almost invariably at the gallop, for miles and miles together. He feasts, I imagine, much upon those animals during the winter season; as, to judge by his tracks, he is continually in chase of them. He is not a gregarious animal, being always alone during his hunting excursions.

The female carries her young from three to four months, and brings forth in May: this is

generally in the cavity of a rock, or other sequestered spot. She has seldom more than one or two at a birth; sometimes, however, she has been known to have three. They are said to attain their full growth in about a year.

Unlike the bear, and other animals of his race, which pass the winter months in a torpid state, the glutton keeps on foot during the whole of that inclement period of the year. Though a small beast, his paws are of an immense size, in proportion to his body. This enables him to traverse the country with facility when the ground is deeply covered with snow. His tracks, in many respects, resemble those of the bear, and by ignorant people are often mistaken for that animal's.

I never killed, or even saw a glutton; but if the country were at all open, and the snow in good order, it would doubtless be feasible to run him down upon skidor.

Having spoken frequently of the rat in the course of this work, as being one of those animals preyed upon by Scandinavian wild beasts, it may be proper for me to say a few words regarding that pernicious creature.

There are several of the *Mus** genus in Scandi-

* Linnæus, and other naturalists, class the lemming, the water-rat, &c. along with this genus; but Mr. Nilsson says, that the external appearance of these animals, as well as their internal structure, (though bearing a strong resemblance to each other) differ so essentially from the rat species, that he has been

navia, viz:—The black rat (*mus rattus*); the brown rat (*mus decumanus*); the common house-mouse (*mus musculus*); and the long-tailed field-mouse (*mus sylvaticus*). I shall speak of these animals in the order in which they stand.

The predominant colour of the black rat is, as the name denotes, black, the under part of the body is hoary; but accidental varieties often occur with this as with other Scandinavian animals. Some of these are quite black; others quite white, whilst now and then they are spotted. He is from six and a half to seven inches in length from the nose to the insertion of the tail; whilst the latter, which is naked and scaly, measures from seven and a half to eight inches, which is more than the length of his body.

The black rat, according to Swedish naturalists, is not originally Scandinavian. It made its appearance in Europe about two hundred years ago, and some time afterwards found its way to that peninsula, having probably been wafted to its shores by trading vessels; but from what quarter of the world it came still seems doubtful. This animal was formerly much more abundant in Sweden and Norway than at present, but since the brown rat, which is larger and stronger, has

induced to class them as a genus of their own. I shall therefore follow the Professor's example, though I shall defer to a future occasion some few remarks that I purpose making regarding the lemming, whose migratory habits have of late years excited some speculation among naturalists.

been introduced into those countries it has been gradually decreasing. In most seaport towns, Professor Nilsson says, the black rat is now either entirely eradicated, or at least but rarely seen. In some parts of the interior, however, where the brown rat has not hitherto penetrated in any considerable numbers, they are still pretty abundant.

The female of this species has ten teats; she is said to be gravid nearly four weeks, and to bring forth from four to seven young at a birth. She breeds twice, if not thrice in the year.

Though in England we designate the common brown rat as the Norway rat, it is perhaps little entitled to this appellation, for that animal, as I have just shown, is not indigenous to Scandinavia. Indeed, it was not known in that peninsula until the last century, at which period it was brought to Europe, as it is supposed, by ships from the East Indies. It is now to be found in all the seaport towns in Sweden and Norway: it must be a hardy animal, as it is to be met with beyond the Polar circle.

This animal is larger than the black rat; his body measuring from eight to nine inches in length, but his tail is shorter in proportion to his size, as that does not exceed from six to seven inches. His predominant colour, as it is known, is brown.

The female of this species has twelve teats,

whereas, as I have shown, the black rat has only ten; like that animal, she brings forth two or three times in the course of the year, but her progeny is more numerous, as Mr. Nilsson says, she produces from twelve to eighteen at a birth.

Though the rat is a granivorous as well as a carnivorous animal, it is said he will always leave vegetable matter untouched if animal substances are procurable. Poultry both old and young, it is well known, often become his prey, and his voracity is such, that he has been actually seen to fasten on the fatter parts of living swine; he will feed upon dead bodies, and children in the cradle are not at all times exempt from his attacks.

Some shocking stories are told of these animals, among others the following:—Some few years ago, an old man in the province of Scania proceeded alone in the winter season to fetch home some hay, which was stacked in a morass at some distance from his residence. In this, however, a great number of rats had taken up their abode, and had so excavated it, that when the poor fellow mounted to the top he sunk down headlong into the middle of the stack, from whence he was unable to extricate himself. Two days afterwards he was found dead, and devoured to the very bones by these destructive beasts.

The common house mouse is to be found almost everywhere in Scandinavia; he much resembles

ours in appearance and habits. Accidental varieties of this species are not very uncommon.

White mice, with red eyes, have occasionally been met with ; and others white, covered with spots.

The long-tailed field-mouse is numerous in all the southern and middlemost provinces of Sweden ; he derives his subsistence from the animal as well as the vegetable kingdom. According to Professor Nilsson, these mice sometimes migrate like the lemming. They assemble in immense numbers, and proceeding in a direct line towards a given point of the compass, cross mountains, rivers, and any other obstacles that impede their way ; but in their progress many are drowned, and numbers are destroyed by birds and beasts of prey, so that at length the whole multitude are supposed to perish.

To proceed.—At nightfall we faced for Flisberg, which was situated in the wilds of the Norwegian forests at about fourteen miles to the westward of Aspberg, where we arrived at about eight o'clock in the evening. Here resided a peasant named Olof Mattsson. Our object in visiting him was in consequence of its being reported that he had ringed a bear in the vicinity of that place. But on questioning the man on the subject, we found that, though such had actually been the case, yet, from the weather being

misty at the time, he had never since been able to find the spot. He had made several attempts, he stated, to effect the object, but all had been unavailing.

Mattsson was advanced in years, but he was still about the first chasseur in that part of the country : he was said to be a capital shot with his rifle, and in his day to have shot a vast quantity of different kinds of game.

He had only killed two or three bears, however : this was as well owing to his never having made the pursuit of these animals a primary object, as that they were scarce in his vicinity.

He had never been wounded by a bear, which was little to be wondered at, from his having so seldom come in contact with them ; but his father had not been alike fortunate, for one of those ferocious brutes tore out his eye, and otherwise severely injured him.

During the winter, Mattsson had killed, he stated, near thirty capercali, and, on one occasion, six in the course of the day. One particular season, he shot ninety-seven of these noble birds. He used a long and heavy rifle, similar to those commonly to be met with in Norway. The bore was small, as it did not carry balls of a larger size than forty or fifty to the pound. With this rifle, however, he asserted, he was regularly in the habit of killing the capercali at one hundred and eighty or two hundred paces.

Our host seemed in rather affluent circumstances, having abundance of the necessities, as well as some of the luxuries of life about him. Here I fared sumptuously, as dried venison, coffee, &c. were set before me. The latter beverage is in much more general use among the Norwegian than the Swedish peasantry. Sugar-candy is almost invariably substituted in Norway for sugar. My lodgings were not the best ; for, as the family was large, a room could not be spared for my separate accommodation ; but a bed of clean straw was made up for me in one corner of the apartment, where I was fortunate enough to obtain several hours' repose.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Elk—his scarcity ; size ; description ; gestation ; longevity ; horns ; pace ; places of resort ; food ; flesh ; skin ; domestication.—Chasse of that animal.—Anecdote.

THOUGH it was an uncommon circumstance for elks to be seen in the vicinity of Lapp-cottage, they were rather abundant in the part of the country of which I am now speaking. During the past summer and autumn, Mattsson stated they had been unusually plentiful ; and, as a proof of it, he said that, at the first setting in of the winter, forty-seven of these animals, as was seen by their tracks in the snow, had crossed the pathway leading from Tryssild to Elverum, which was in the vicinity of his residence, a distance of between twenty and thirty miles ; and to have faced in a northerly direction for a line of country where they were in the habit of passing that inclement period of the year.

These noble animals, the pride of the Scandinavian wilds, were formerly found in many other

parts of Europe, where the species is now altogether extinct. They were common, according to ancient authors, to the forests of Germany as well as of Gaul.

The elk was at one time numerous in most parts of Sweden and Norway; but owing to the increased population, and other causes, he is now only to be met with in particular districts. In Scania, the most southern province of Sweden, where elks once abounded, there are now none to be found. "The elk cannot endure," says Mr. Nilsson, "so cold a climate as the stag, the sixty-fourth degree of latitude being the extreme limit at which he is met with in the Scandinavian peninsula."

The elk is sometimes of an enormous size; though his length is not proportionate, it is said, he not unfrequently attains to the height of seven or eight feet. This I can readily believe, as Mr. Wise, the Swedish Consul-General, had one in his possession a few years ago, which, though only two years of age, measured nearly nineteen hands, or upwards of six feet at the shoulder. I once took the exact dimensions of a rather large male elk that I shot, but, unfortunately, I lost the string with which I effected that purpose out of my pocket. Though this animal was not fully grown, it was thought he weighed near one thousand pounds. The male elk is very much larger than the female.

The head of the elk is about two feet long; the neck, on which is a short upright mane, of a light brown colour, is much shorter; the eye is small, and from the lower corner of it, there is a deep slit, common to all the deer kind, as well as most of the gazelles; the ears are upwards of a foot in length, very broad, and somewhat slouching; the nostrils are wide; and the upper lip, which is square, and has a deep furrow in the middle, hangs greatly over the lower, whence it was imagined by the ancients, that this creature could not graze without going backwards; the withers are very high, the hind-legs much shorter than the fore-legs, and the hoofs deeply cloven; from a small excrescence under the throat hangs a long tuft of coarse black hair; the tail is about six inches long, dusky above, and white beneath; the hair is long, and rough, like that of the bear, and of a hoary brown, not much differing from that of an ass. The colour of the elk, however, varies according to his age and the season of the year; in the winter it has a grayer cast than at the opposite season.

The period of gestation with the elk is about nine months; the female brings forth about the middle of May, from one to three young ones; but it is seldom that she has more than two. At this period, the mother retires alone to the wildest recesses of the forest. After the lapse of two or three days, the fawns, which are of a light

brown colour, have sufficient strength to follow their dam every where; they keep with her until they are in their third year, when she leaves them to shift for themselves.

The elk is a long-lived animal; he does not attain to his full growth until after his fourteenth year. At least so it is to be presumed, as up to that period his horns, which are of a flat form, are annually provided with an additional branch. He sheds his horns about the month of February in each year. The female elk, unlike the reindeer of that sex, has no horns.

The horns of the young male elk are perceptible nine months after its birth: for the first year, they are cylindrical, and short; the second year they are about a foot in length, but not branched; the third year, two points are discernible; the fourth year, three; the fifth, they are full grown in length. From that time forward, they yearly increase in breadth, and in the number of branches, until there are as many as fourteen on each horn.

By nature, the elk is timorous, and he usually flies at the sight of man. In the rutting season, however, like other animals of the deer kind, he is at times rather dangerous. His weapons are his horns and hoofs; he strikes so forcibly with the latter, as to annihilate a wolf, or other large animal, at a single blow. It is said that, when the elk is incensed, the hair on his neck bristles up

like the mane of a lion, which gives him a wild and frightful appearance.

The usual pace of the elk is a high shambling trot, and his strides are immense, but I have known him, when frightened, to go at a tremendous gallop. In passing through thick woods, he carries his horns horizontally, to prevent them from being entangled in the branches; from the formation of his hoofs, he makes a great clattering, like the reindeer when in rapid motion.

In the summer season, the elk usually resorts to morasses and low situations; for, like other animals of the deer kind, he frequently takes to the water in warm weather; he is an admirable swimmer. In the winter-time, he retires to the more sheltered parts of the forest, where willow, ash, &c. are to be found; as, from the small boughs of these trees, he obtains his sustenance during that period of the year. In the summer and autumn, the elk is often to be met with in small herds; but in the winter, there are seldom more than two or three in company. At the latter season, indeed, he is frequently alone.

The flesh of the elk, whether fresh or smoked, is very excellent: the young are particularly delicious. According to Mr. Nilsson, it resembles in taste that of the stag. The tongue and the nose are thought to be great delicacies in Scandinavia, as well as in America. Great virtue was once placed in the hoof of that animal, as parings

of it were supposed to be a specific against the falling sickness and other disorders; but this idle notion must by this time, I should think, be nearly exploded.

The skin is convertible to many purposes, and is very valuable. Mr. Greiff says—"It is not long since that a regiment was clothed with buff waistcoats, made from the hides of those animals, which were so thick, that a ball could scarcely penetrate them." He adds farther, that, "when made into breeches, a pair of them, among the peasantry of former days, went as a legacy for several generations."

The elk is easily domesticated:—several instances have come to my knowledge. I had a fawn in my own possession a year ago; but, from want of proper nurture, it died.

Formerly, these animals were made use of in Sweden to draw sledges; but owing, as it was said, to their speed frequently accelerating the escape of people who had been guilty of murders, or other crimes, the use of them was prohibited under great penalties. Though I apprehend those ordinances, if not abrogated, are obsolete, I am not aware that the elk is ever made use of in that kingdom, at the present day, either to draw a sledge, or for other domestic purpose.

In Sweden, as I have observed, it is contrary to law, at this particular time, to kill the elk at any season of the year: this is not the case in Nor-

way ; for, in that country, as I have just shown, these animals may be destroyed, with certain limitations as to numbers, from the first of July to the first of November, inclusive. The penalty, however, for killing an elk out of season, in Norway, is very much heavier than in Sweden ; it amounts, indeed, including legal expenses, &c. to about twenty pounds, which is no inconsiderable sum in that kingdom.

The usual manner in which these animals are killed in the line of country of which I am now speaking, during the autumnal months, is something curious. With his well-trained dog in a long leash, the sportsman proceeds to those parts of the forest which he has reason to suppose are frequented by the elk : whilst traversing this, he halts occasionally to give his dog the wind. This the intelligent animal seems perfectly to understand, for, holding up his nose, he snuffs the passing breeze.

When therefore the dog has got scent of the elk, which I have seen him do from a very long distance, the sportsman allows him, though still in the leash, to draw upon the animal, and follows after as quick as he is able. When the dog has approached to within a short distance of the elk, he evinces, by his anxiety, that the game is not far distant. The man now proceeds with every deliberation and caution. That his movements may be effected with the greater silence, he gene-

rally ties his dog to a tree, who is too well trained to give tongue in the absence of his master, and alone reconnoitres the surrounding country. Thus the man not unfrequently succeeds in getting a view of the elk, either whilst lying down or feeding, and of slaughtering him with his rifle ; but much more commonly the elk, from his exquisite sense of smelling, takes the alarm, and goes off at the top of his speed.

The sportsman has now the like game to play over again, either with the same or another elk : thus he may sometimes go on for days together, without succeeding in getting a shot. This does not arise so much from the scarcity of those animals, as from their extreme shyness.

It is not difficult to pursue the same elk for a day or two together, as, owing to his holding principally to the morasses and low ground in the summer season, his track is in most places perceptible ; at times, however, one is thrown out ; but, on such occasions, a good dog will generally enable the sportsman to retrieve the animal.

Hard blowing weather is the best for the purpose, as the noise made among the trees by the wind prevents the elk from hearing the approach of the hunter ; the scent is then breast high, and the dog, in consequence, is enabled to take a man in a direct line up to the game. If it be calm, on the contrary, the dog cannot wind the elk from any considerable distance ; and the latter,

besides, is then able to hear the slightest rustling among the bushes.

The dogs used for this purpose are rather of a mongrel breed ; but they are possessed of excellent noses, and are often admirably trained.

When people are pursuing this sport, they should be careful not to let the leash out of their hands, which is likely enough to occur owing to the eagerness of the dog. An old chasseur told me a circumstance of this kind happened to himself ; but, though he searched the forest in every direction for many successive days, he was never able to recover the poor animal, who had doubtless perished from the leash getting entangled among the trees.

When people are engaged in this amusement, they not very unfrequently fall in with and destroy bears.

The rutting season, which commences about the latter end of August, and continues throughout September, is the best time to shoot the elk ; the exquisite sense of smelling possessed by these animals is then said to be, in some degree, impaired ; be that as it may, from being engaged in their amours, they are then more easy of access.

At this period, the elk usually congregates in considerable herds, and if there be several males among them, desperate battles not unfrequently take place. The victor is now left in quiet possession, whilst the remainder roam the forest in

search of other females; but, "in the event of their meeting with disappointment," says Mr. Nilsson, "they are driven almost to madness, and at such times will not shun even inhabited places. They are then very malicious, and attack even men, not, as is usual, with the horns, but with the feet."

Mr. Greiff, in alluding to the above quotation, says, a circumstance of the kind never came to his knowledge. I have been assured, however, by people in whom I could place confidence, that, once now and then, the elk has been known to turn upon the hunter; but I never heard of any one having been injured by these animals.

When the Northern chasseur approaches near to a herd at this season, he often slips the dogs from the couplings; in which case, it not unfrequently happens that the old males are brought to bay, when of course it is easy to steal upon them. The dog must always be allowed to start the elk; for should the latter once get sight or scent of the sportsman, he usually goes off at his best pace.

The great inconvenience of slipping a dog on these occasions, is, that if he should be good for any thing, and the elk does not stand to bay, he will hardly ever desist from pursuing the animal; and thus the sportsman may be thrown out altogether.

To guard against a circumstance of this kind happening, the Northern chasseurs, there generally

being two or more in company on these occasions, are not unfrequently provided with a second dog, which they retain in his leash. When therefore they can no longer hear the challenges of the dog that is loosed in the distance, the other enables them to continue the pursuit. Sometimes, however, dogs go off altogether from their masters: I have heard of instances of their pursuing the elk such great distances, that they have been lost to their owners for days and days together, and have perhaps cast up at last in an altogether different part of the country.

The *chasse* of the elk during the winter season, when permitted, used to be conducted in the northern parts of Scandinavia in a very different manner to that of which I am speaking. It is well that this prohibition exists, as, from the great facility of destroying those animals during that inclement period of the year, the breed would otherwise be probably soon exterminated. But even in the winter, if the snow should be at all loose, it is not easy to get within rifle-range of the elk, excepting by stratagem; on foot, if the snow be deep, it is next to impossible; and even the best runner upon skidor stands little chance of success: this may be readily imagined, when I mention that, on more than one occasion, I have seen by the tracks of that animal, that he has gone at the full gallop when the snow has been from three to four feet in depth,—the extra-

ordinary length of his legs, together with his great strength, thus enabling him to overcome what would otherwise seem an almost insurmountable difficulty.

Should the snow, however, be pretty deep, and there be a crust upon it sufficiently hard wholly or partially to support the weight of a man on skidor, the elk stands a sorry chance against his pursuer: from his great weight, he usually sinks to the ground at every step: after the chase, therefore, has continued for a while, the frozen surface cuts his legs to that degree, that they bleed profusely; and, as the poor creature is then only able to proceed with pain and difficulty, in the course of a few hours, and even very much less, he usually falls a prey to the hunter; still he will sometimes run for a very long distance, and perhaps elude his pursuers for the first or even the second day; but should the chase be continued, he commonly falls a sacrifice.

During many winters, in the more northern parts of Scandinavia, little or no rain falls; and, in consequence, it is only in the spring, owing to partial thaws, or the effects of the sun, that the snow acquires the crust of which I have more than once spoken. This crust, at that period, usually disappears from the snow by nine or ten o'clock in the morning: it is customary, therefore, for the hunter to start the elk, which he has previously ringed, at the first break of day; but

should he not succeed in coming up with him, he desists from the pursuit as soon as the surface of the snow begins to loosen; for the action of his skidor is then impeded, and the animal can, without inconvenience, proceed at his own pace.

In this case, he allows the elk to go off for the time, without farther molestation, when, following leisurely upon his tracks, he some hours afterwards again encircles him. Should the frost, however, set in towards evening with severity, so that another crust is formed upon the snow, sufficiently hard to support his skidor, he again starts, and pursues the animal; but most commonly he waits until the succeeding morning; but his chances of success are now greatly improved, as, from the few hours' rest the poor creature has enjoyed, his wounds have become stiffened, and, in consequence, he is much less capable of effecting his escape.

The elk often runs a very long distance. A chasseur near Gefle assured me he followed one of those animals on his snow-skates for eleven Swedish, or near eighty English miles, before he came up with him. This chase lasted two days. The old male elk generally runs the farthest; for, though his weight causes him to sink through the crust on the surface of the snow, which is not always the case with the young of these animals, his great strength enables him to hold out the longest.

When hard pushed, the elk, like other animals of the deer kind, usually takes to the water; in which case, he of course falls an easy prey to his pursuer. At times, owing to his weight, he breaks through the ice; if he was to be shot in this situation, he would sink to the bottom, and thus be lost to the hunter: to guard against this happening, the Northern chasseurs are in the habit of fastening a rope about the poor creature's neck, before they put a period to his miseries.

A good dog is of great service on these occasions; he enables a person to take many a short cut, the elk, as is the case with the bear, not unfrequently making doubles in the course of a long run. Unlike that beast, however, who usually holds to the most tangled brakes, he commonly keeps to a rather open line of country, which is a very favourable circumstance for the sportsman. Though a dog is of much use on these occasions, a good runner upon skidor, if the snow be in proper order, will soon run down an elk without the assistance of that animal.

The pursuit of the elk upon skidor often requires immense exertion on the part of the hunter; as, to enable him to come up with that animal, he is not unfrequently obliged to go at a most rattling pace;—at such a one, indeed, that almost every person that I ever met with who had been much engaged in that description of *chasse*, were either broken down, or had more or less injured

their health. One man, I remember, told me that, for many days subsequent to a very severe run, his hand continued to tremble as if he had had the palsy.

There was an old elk-hunter living at this time at Aspberg, who, in his younger days, had much distinguished himself in the pursuit of those animals upon his skidor; but he had for years been bedridden, in consequence of lameness, or rather a contraction of the sinews, which had been brought on by the severe exertions he had gone through. Though this veteran was upwards of ninety, he was apparently in perfect possession of his faculties; of that of drinking, I can at all events testify to, for he quaffed off a glass of brandy that I gave him, as if it had been so much water. I heard of some desperate runs in which this man had been engaged.

Mr. Greiff speaks of killing the elk to pointers: he says, that about the year 1790, when he was residing in Westmanland, where those animals were at that time very numerous, he shot no fewer than eleven in the course of one season, to a favourite dog of his, called Caresse. Though I should think this plan would answer very well, I never heard of its being adopted in any other instance.

In Herjedalen, and other northern provinces of Sweden, the elk used formerly to be taken in pitfalls; they were of a circular form, and of

about twenty feet as well in depth as diameter ; they were covered over with boughs, leaves, &c. I am not quite sure if that plan is now adopted in any part of Scandinavia.

The elk, as I have remarked, is a capital swimmer. During the rutting season, in particular, he often crosses large rivers and lakes in search of the females. Mr. Garberg related a rather curious circumstance regarding that animal, that occurred in the vicinity of Gefle, a few years ago. A peasant seeing one of them take to the water, pursued him in a boat ; he was armed only with a knife, and was therefore unable to kill the poor creature, until he jumped on his back, in which situation he cut his throat.

CHAPTER XXV.

Bear Hunt.

ON Wednesday we returned to Aspberg, where we remained during the following day, as the dogs and ourselves stood much in need of repose.

On Friday morning, the 28th of March, Elg and myself started from that place, for the purpose of beating the eastern face of the range of hills where we had slaughtered the bear a few days previously; here the cover was in places remarkably thick and good, and, from some intelligence we had received, we thought it not improbable that one of those animals might be lying thereabouts. On this occasion, we took Olof and Henrik along with us, the latter being of course followed by his dog Passopp.

There had been a snow-storm during the preceding night, which continued at intervals during the whole of the day, and, in consequence, there was a good deal of snow in the trees. As

there were a few degrees of frost, and the day was dark and windy, our skidor ran very well.

On this, as on similar occasions, we formed a line, and beat the forest before us, in the usual manner. Thus we proceeded for several hours, without meeting with the bear of which we were in search; but we found a den where one of these animals had passed the winter months a year or two previously.

About one o'clock however, at which time it was snowing very fast, Passopp, who might be near a hundred paces a head of us, began to challenge in a tangled but rather low brake. Though, from the intervening trees, I could not at this time see the dog, yet, from his manner, his remaining stationary, and the little probability there was that he had met with birds, or other game, in such a situation, I more than suspected he had fallen in with the bear. I now lost no time in shaking my double gun out of its case, where, for my greater convenience, I had hitherto carried it, and of pushing at my best pace towards Passopp.

The spot where he was challenging was a small opening in the thicket. But there was nothing to be seen excepting a little aperture of less than a foot in diameter, in the surface of the snow, which was perfectly level, and near to which he stood furiously baying. This I of course instantly knew to be Bruin's lair, and I was also

very certain, from the manner of the dogs, for Paijas had now come up, that he was within it. Not caring to waste time, therefore, and having confidence in my gun, which was loose in my hand, I at once ran my skidor, one on each side of the hole.

On looking down this pit,—the snow on every side being nearer five than four feet in depth,—I espied the bear very snugly coiled up at the bottom. By this time, the animal had partly awakened from his nap, which had probably been of many months' continuance, and was beginning to move his head about, as if at a loss to know what was going forward. I now pointed my gun downwards between my legs, it being then in a perpendicular direction, and pulled the trigger; but, instead of splitting his skull, as I fully anticipated would have been the case, the piece, as ill-luck would have it, missed fire. This must either have been owing to the snow that was coming down, or the powder falling from the pan, in consequence of the position in which I stood. In another moment I drew the other trigger, though, unfortunately, with as little success, for my second, like my first barrel, also refused to perform its duty.

The bear had by this time roused himself, and was just springing from his lair, when Elg, who had followed closely in my rear, put my rifle,





Drawn by J. M. Baynes

Engraved by C. H. Townsend

THE AUTHOR IN PERSONAL CONFLICT WITH A BEAR .

ready cocked, into my hand; this I as instantly discharged at the animal, and though the muzzle of it was within less than a foot of his head, strange to say, I managed to miss him altogether. I suppose most people will imagine this arose from trepidation; but, according to my own notion, it was from shooting in too great a hurry; I had no time, indeed, to take aim; my ball, however, I apprehend, all but grazed his skull, the point at which it was directed.

The bear now bolted from between my legs, and reached the surface of the snow; and, in consequence, we were, as the old saying goes, "cheek by jowl" with each other. Here, as he stood grinning, I drove the muzzle of my rifle with considerable force under his ear, the point exposed to me, by which I partly succeeded in upsetting him. This foolish act arose rather from a feeling of ill-nature and disappointment at my having so stupidly allowed him to escape, than from entertaining any apprehension of his attacking me, which he looked well-inclined to do. Very fortunately, the beast only resented this assault by seizing hold of the barrel of my rifle; for, after indenting this with his teeth, at about a foot from the muzzle, he thought it the wisest plan to walk himself off.

The accompanying print, with the exception of the cover being much thicker thereabouts,

gives a very correct representation of the scene I have been describing.

Fortunately for me, this bear was not large ; had the contrary been the case, for the old ones are always the most savage, it is more than probable he would have given me a broken head. Escape at the time was impossible, and both Elg and myself were entirely unarmed, after I had discharged my rifle. It is true, one of our peasants was provided with an axe ; but this man was far in the back-ground, and it is besides more than doubtful whether he would have ventured to have rendered us assistance in the event of its turning out a serious affair.

I now reloaded my rifle, but the locks of my double gun being filled with the falling snow, I had no leisure to put it in order. Letting it remain *in statu quo*, therefore, we forthwith gave chase.

During the little delay that necessarily took place whilst the above operation was going on, the bear seemed to have made good use of his legs, as, to judge by the challenges of the dogs, who kept pretty well up with him, he had by this time got some distance ahead. Fortunately the snow was in good order for our skidor, and we were therefore enabled to proceed at a good pace. For a while, we had to contend against rising ground, and to force our way through a large and densely thick brake ; but, when we had

surmounted those difficulties, we pushed quickly forward, and gained rapidly upon the bear.

The run might now have lasted for near three-quarters of an hour, during which the animal had proceeded in almost a direct line from the point where he had started; when, on reaching an eminence, we had the gratification of viewing him at about two hundred and fifty paces ahead: at this time he was galloping slowly forward, though occasionally stopping, as if his attention was taken up with the dogs that were following a little in his rear.

We now dashed after the bear at the very top of our speed. The forest hereabouts was fortunately open, and the ground falling, and of course very favourable for our skidor; so that, from going at a killing pace, a very short time sufficed to bring us within sixty or seventy paces of the animal. We then halted; when taking my rifle from Elg, who had it loose in his hand, I discharged it at the beast. He was still in the gallop, and rather crossing me; but my ball took the desired effect, for, entering one side of his neck, it passed out at the other, when he sank down, and instantly expired.

Both Elg and myself were a little surprised at the short continuance of this chase; for, though the bear certainly sank six or eight inches into the snow at every step, he undoubtedly might have gone much quicker than he did, had he

chosen it : at all events, he might have proceeded fast enough to have left poor Pajjas far in the back-ground. It would have seemed, indeed, that if we had had a more favourable line of country before us in the first instance, we might have run him down in a few minutes. The dogs, however, were probably the cause of his not making better use of his legs.

Bears are always more easily approachable on the first occasion of their being started from their winter-quarters, than at an after-period. This is, I believe, admitted by every one who knows any thing of the *chasse* of these animals. Probably this may be owing to their senses being confused at their being thus untimely roused from their slumbers ; or, perhaps, to some internal cause which makes them incapable of the same exertions as at other times. For this reason, it is always desirable to push after a bear at one's best pace the moment he is started.

Though the run was short, it was severe, and we, in consequence, were much heated after our exertions. To prevent getting chilled, therefore, we soon got up a roaring fire. As we had not broken our fast since the first appearance of day, we now refreshed ourselves with the little provision we had in our knapsack :—we did not forget a dram of brandy.

We then dispatched Oloff to Aspberg, whence we were only about three miles distant, for a

hand sledge—such a one as is drawn by men, there being no track in that part of the forest suitable for a horse—for the conveyance of the bear; and, subsequently, after we had unsuccessfully beaten several thick brakes, in the hopes of finding another of these animals, we ourselves proceeded to that hamlet.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Lutenäs and Lima bears.—Galläsen.—Flermön.—Nya Lördal.—
Celebrated chasseur.—Anecdotes.—Snow-blindness.

AT nine o'clock on the evening of Tuesday, 1st of April, when we got back to Aspberg, after having bivouacked during the preceding night in the Norwegian forest, where we had been wandering for a day or two, we received intelligence of two bears; one in the vicinity of Lutenäs, in Norway, a hamlet situated on the Klar, at some fourteen miles to the north-west; the other in the parish of Lima, in Dalecarlia, which, as the crow flies, (the regular route being most circuitous,) was about fifty miles in a south-easterly direction. The letter containing the information regarding the Lima bear was brought me by my landlady from Lapp-cottage; this had been conveyed to that place, in the first instance, from Dalecarlia, and, in consequence, it had now performed a journey of one hundred and sixty or one hundred and seventy miles. The good woman was also the bearer of several other letters, one containing

a few rix-dollars, which, as I was almost aground for money, proved a very seasonable supply.

We subsequently went in pursuit of both these bears ; they had, however, been previously much hunted by the peasants, and necessarily rendered exceedingly wild : from this cause, coupled with the state of the snow consequent on the advanced period of the season, and the want of a good dog, all our endeavours to kill them proved unavailing. This being the case, I shall go into but few details.

Prior to starting in pursuit of these beasts, I sent my sledge, and such parts of my baggage as I could possibly spare, (reserving only as much as two people could carry with facility,) back to Lapp-cottage, with my landlady. This I did from thinking it probable we might remain in the interior for some little time longer, when, from the near approach of spring, it became very uncertain when the frost might break up, and the route homewards would, in consequence, become impassable to any kind of vehicle. By adopting this course, we were left at liberty to roam the forest in any direction we pleased ; for, on our skidor, we could skim over rivers, lakes, or the most precipitous mountains with every facility.

The weather for the greater part of the month of March had been rather mild, so unlike what is commonly the case in the northern parts of Scandinavia at that period of the year ; in that

time, we experienced little besides a succession of heavy gales of wind; but the winter was not yet at an end, for, on the 1st of April, the frost once more set in with much rigour; the temperature, indeed, was so severe for the succeeding ten or twelve days, as almost to make me think that it was December or January, instead of that genial month. What the degree of cold might be, I was nevertheless unable to ascertain, as, along with my baggage, I had sent two of my three thermometers to Lapp-cottage: the one that remained was unfortunately only graduated to twenty-six degrees below the point of congelation; but on exposing this to the air, during either morning or evening, the quicksilver usually dropped in the ball.

We gave chase to the Lutenäs bear in the first instance, that being nearest to Aspberg. This fellow gave us two or three very severe runs: one day, in particular, when the snow was in capital order for our skidor, I think we could not have driven him less than between forty and fifty miles.

We were in pursuit, at intervals, of this bear for about a fortnight; sometimes we lost him in consequence of his tracks being obliterated by the wind; whilst at others, the snow was in so unfavourable a state for our skidor, that we did not deem it advisable to rouse him. In that while we drove him over a vast tract of the Norwegian and Dalecarlian forests. At one time, I

think he could hardly have been less than fifty miles from the point where we originally started him.

Though we pressed several people as well as dogs into our service during the period I speak of, we were never fortunate enough to get a shot at this bear. Indeed, it was on but one occasion that we viewed the fellow in the distance.

Whilst following this bear, we quartered ourselves, as the *chasse* led us, at various places in the forest. Once at a small hamlet called Galläsen, situated within the Norwegian frontier, about fourteen miles to the northward of Lutenäs. Mr. Tank, of Frederickshall, who is well known to many of our countrymen for his unbounded hospitality, is possessed of a very large tract of forest in the vicinity of this place. He had an agent residing there, a Mr. Quesling, from whom I received a hearty welcome, and the best that his house afforded.

In another instance, we took up our quarters, for a short time, at Flermön, a small hamlet consisting of three families, situated in the wilds of the Norwegian forest, at about ten miles to the eastward of Galläsen. Here we met with tolerable accommodation, the peasant, at whose house we remained, being in most comfortable circumstances. He had a large and fine family; among the rest several blooming daughters: one of these was married to a young peasant,

who, like most of the people thereabout, ran capitally upon his skidor: he was said to have been a rather successful chasseur, and, among other game, to have killed three or four bears; we pressed him, together with a famous dog he had, called Munter, into our service more than once.

On a third occasion, we stopped for the night in a glen called Nya Lördal, situated at the foot of the Faxefjäll. The scenery here was very picturesque. A fine river, called the Loren, one of the principal tributaries of the Dal, meandered through the valley, which was rather deeply wooded; whilst, on either hand, the snow-capped mountains rose to a very considerable height.

In this sequestered dell there had stood, a few weeks previously, the residences of two peasants; but one of these was burnt to the ground, owing to an accidental conflagration. It was fortunate, however, that there was a friendly roof to receive the destitute family. Though the houses in Scandinavia are constructed of inflammatory materials, occurrences of this kind are not very common: and this is the more remarkable, inasmuch as the inhabitants are excessively careless of fire.

Our host, whose name I forget, was rather advanced in years; in his day, he had been the most celebrated chasseur in all that part of the country. If report was to be believed, he had been the hardest and best runner upon skidor in

the parish of Tryssild, which covers no considerable space of ground. He was now in bad health; his sight was dim; he was deaf as a post, and full of infirmities. This, it was said, was in consequence of the very severe exertion he had gone through in his younger days, when engaged in the chase of wild animals. He was still, nevertheless, a fine and determined-looking fellow.

The bear, the elk, and the reindeer, abundance of which had formerly been found in the vicinity of Nya Lördal, had formed the principal objects of his pursuit. In his time, he had slaughtered great numbers of these animals. As he had not kept any regular account, he was unable to inform us of the number of bears that he had killed. But he thought it must have been upwards of fifty.

He generally shot these beasts with the assistance of his dog, which he hunted in a leash, in the manner practised by the Northern chasseurs, when in pursuit of the elk. This was usually during the autumnal months, at which period the bears were often on the fjäll sides, for the purpose of feeding upon the cranberry, and other berries common to the Scandinavian wilds; in such exposed situations, it was easy to see those animals from a long distance, and consequently to steal upon them.

However feasible this plan might be in such an open line of country as I am speaking of, it would

be little likely to answer, I should imagine, in deeply-wooded districts ; as, besides the impediment arising from obstruction of sight, the sportsman would necessarily make so much noise in advancing among the trees, that in all probability the bear would take the alarm, and move himself off to another part of the forest.

Though this man had killed so many bears, he had never been injured by them ; but in two instances he had had rather narrow escapes. In one, the bear, which he had wounded some little time before, dashed at him at the top of his speed, and was so nearly in upon him before he had time to fire, that, though he shot the ferocious brute through the heart, in falling, the animal almost rolled over his feet.

The other was a more serious affair : it occurred during the autumnal months. His dog winded two bears, a male and female, from a long distance. On his getting a view of the animals, he fastened his faithful attendant, as was his usual custom, to a tree, and advanced alone with every caution until he was within some twenty-five paces of the beasts. He now took aim at the male bear, which he described as an immense brute ; but very unfortunately, on pulling the trigger, his rifle missed fire. The animal, on hearing the click, pricked his ears, and stood for a while all attention ; this gave him leisure again to put his lock in order, which he did with all imagin-

able silence; when he again drew his trigger, though, as ill-luck would have it, with no better success than before. The bear, who by this time had discovered whence the noise originated, now dashed at him; and as escape was impossible, and as he had no other means of defence, the man opposed the muzzle of his rifle to the enraged brute; this the animal seized hold of, and deeply indented it with his teeth. The man was behind or near a tree, when pressing his gun against its trunk, in which situation it acted like a lever, he succeeded in wrenching it out of the jaws of the beast. In the act of doing so, however, he fell on his back, when the bear, as may readily be supposed, was quickly upon him.

At this moment, fortunately, the dog, who was at some distance in the back-ground, either seeing or hearing what was going forward, began to challenge; this attracted the attention of the brute, and most happily for the poor fellow, for he was quite alone, caused him to walk off.

On this occasion, the man very fortunately received no injury to his person. The sleeve of his coat did not fare quite so well, as the brute tore that to pieces. But he was horribly frightened, so much so, indeed, according to his own account, that he continued to tremble for a fortnight afterwards. His was not a singular case; for I remember hearing of another person, who having

in his younger days escaped with difficulty from the attacks of a bear, was seized with a similar tremor, from which he never fully recovered even in advanced age.

This veteran hunter informed me that both elk and bear had some years previously been much more abundant in all that part of the country, than at the period of which I now speak. This was also the case with reindeer, which, however, were still occasionally to be found in the neighbouring fjälls in considerable numbers. In one instance, after a severe chase on his skidor, he ran down a herd of those animals, of which he killed ten or twelve; and, if he had had a sufficiency of ammunition, he could have shot double that number.

He had several children, and among the rest a son whom he had caused to be christened Björn, or, in English, bear, which was perhaps to commemorate his own exploits. This chip of the old block, who was now middle-aged, enjoyed, like his father in his younger days, the reputation of being the best runner upon skidor in all that part of the country. He was also said to be a good shot, though I did not hear of his having committed much execution among either winged or four-footed game.

Both the father and son, whose adventures I have been enumerating, followed us on one occasion, when we gave chase to our bear; but, though

these men were the most celebrated chasseurs in all that part of Norway, we were unable, even with their assistance, to bring the pursuit to a successful termination. On this occasion, we drove the bear over the top of the Faxe-fjäll. On making the descent of this mountain, whose summit must have been elevated two or three thousand feet above the level of the sea, several of our party met with awkward tumbles; one, indeed, smashed his skidor all to pieces. This was the less surprising, as the declivity was precipitous; and, in places, the surface of the snow was so hard frozen, as almost to resemble a glacier.

In our rambles among the fjälls we met with a good many ripa, some few of which we shot; these birds, as I have said, are numerous in all the more mountainous parts of Scandinavia.

At this period, Elg was a good deal afflicted with snow-blindness; which was little to be wondered at, as the country we were traversing was generally very open, and the glare from the snow, in consequence, considerable. But by wearing a small shade over his eyes, and adopting other precautions, he soon got better. I fortunately escaped this evil.

On the 11th of April we discontinued the chase of the Lutenäs bear, as we found we had no chance of coming up with him. The last we saw of the animal was on the summit of the Faxe-fjäll.

From this spot we wended our way on our ski-

dor across the forest, to attack the other bear in the parish of Lima, which was about sixty miles distance, in a south-easterly direction. This beast was in a very wild range of country, to the westward of the Wenjan lake, of which I have spoken when describing the skull in Dalecarlia.

During our progress we passed through the hamlet of Lima, which gave me an opportunity of paying a visit to Mr. Restavius, the pastor of the parish. This venerable gentleman, who was seventy-six years of age, expatiated largely during dinner on the benefits of matrimony, which was not much to be wondered at, as I found that though he had only a short time previously consigned the remains of his fourth wife to mother earth, he was then solacing his grief with another helpmate. But his was not a solitary case, for the clergyman of Appelbo, the adjoining parish, who had attained to the almost patriarchal age of eighty, report said, was at this time enjoying all the blessedness of the wedded state with his *sixth* rib. Eleven wives between two individuals, was, I think, a pretty fair allowance; it was well that these worthy divines were not of the Romish faith, for a life of celibacy must have been worse to them than the purgatory with which their Church threatens evil doers in the next world.

Mr. Restavius had been the rector of Lima for the long period of forty-two years. His parish, he informed me, contained almost 2400

inhabitants; and that though war and pestilence had at one period sensibly diminished the population, still there was on the whole an increase of about three hundred individuals.

We chased the Lima bear with little intermission for a week; but as I have already said, all our endeavours to destroy him were unavailing; indeed, in that time we never succeeded in getting a shot, or even a view. We were often, however, within a very short distance of the beast.

Our ill-fortune was principally attributable to the state of the snow; at times this was so hard, that the animal's tracks in places were not perceptible; whilst at others, the snow was in such a slushy state from the effects of the sun, that we had literally to plough our way through it. Our dogs were besides useless; for Paijas, though willing, was unable to do his duty; and Passopp, whom we had along with us, though fully capable of keeping up with the bear, had not the inclination. At times he would worry the bear for two or three minutes together, but he quickly came to heel.

During this time, we were very scantily supplied with provisions; for these, indeed, we had to send to the hamlets of Öje and Wenjan, which were at a good many miles distance, as all this part of the country was uninhabited.

In all this while we had either to bivouac on

the snow, or to take up our lodgings for the night at such sätterwalls as we fell in with in the course of our rambles through the forest. As I was without even a blanket on this occasion, and had only a hard bench for my bed, and a log for my pillow, I used to think these quarters were much worse than a watch-fire even in the open air ; but as we experienced some heavy snow-storms at this time, it was desirable to be under shelter.

Under any circumstances, it would not have been a luxury thus to rough it ; but, after the hard exercise we occasionally took during the day, the evil told doubly. More than one of our runs after this bear, indeed, were so severe, that although stripped to my shirt and trousers, I was heated to that degree, as to be perfectly wet through : how I managed to stand it out as well as I did, I know not ; for Elg, who had a much stronger constitution than myself, became so ill and knocked up, that two days before I gave in myself, he left me, at his own pressing request, and made the best of his way to his home at Brunberg.

Finding all farther attempts to kill the animal useless, we took our final leave of him at sunrise, on the morning of the 17th of April, and wended our way homewards.

Though this bear, as well as the one at Lutenäs, escaped us, the season was altogether a rather successful one. I believe, however, that there was

not another of those beasts, besides those of which I have made mention, killed in Wermeland during the winter ; this shows their extreme scarcity in Scandinavia.

The snow at this time was still between two and three feet in most parts of the forest ; and the surface of it, at this early hour in the morning, was so hard frozen, that it would bear the weight of a person, even without his skidor ; but when the sun had been above the horizon for a few hours, this crust melted, and the snow then became a mass of slush.

We made for Tando, in the first instance, which was at about seventeen or eighteen miles, as the crow flies, to the westward ; but as the snow was in good order for our skidor, we reached that place in less than four hours. Here I parted from my two peasants, who had accompanied me from Aspberg, when, getting into a sledge, I made the best of my way to Lapp-cottage.

As no occurrence of any interest took place, it would be tedious were I to narrate the particulars of my journey ; suffice it to say, that owing to the wretched state of the roads, which, as I advanced to the south, became nearly bare of snow, it was a slow and most unpleasant one ; and that though I made the best of my way, I did not reach home until the morning of the 19th.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Remarks on Bear-shooting when on skidor ; a good dog invaluable on those occasions ; manner in which the dog conducts his attacks ; danger of shooting the dog ; a dog a great safeguard.—Bears killing dogs ; Bears throwing sticks ; Bears taking refuge in trees.—Bear-spears, guns, &c.—Danger of attacking Bears on skidor.—Anecdotes.—Return to Lapp-cottage.

IF the snow be in good order, and a man has a good dog, the chase of the bear on skidor is a noble amusement ; for, even should it prove unsuccessful, he has at least the satisfaction of enjoying an animating run. Should the dog, on the contrary, be worthless, and should the snow be in an unfavourable state, as was the case with us at this time, the pursuit of those animals becomes excessively disheartening.

For bear-shooting, a first-rate dog is invaluable ; but such are rarely to be found ; indeed, with the exception of Pajjas, I never met with one at all deserving that character : that gal-

lant hound however was, in his better days, every thing I could wish. In one instance, as I have said, I knew him to worry a large bear for nearly eight successive hours; and during a considerable part of this time, no person was with him. Sometimes he was alongside the beast; at others, a little ahead; and then hanging on his rear; and all this while making the forest ring again with his yells. Though he usually conducted his attacks with caution, in consequence of the mauling he received from a bear in his younger days, his courage at times, during this particular chase, got the better of his prudence; for, on hearing my shots, he seldom resisted the temptation of having a snap at the haunches of his rugged antagonist. In this case, the bear would swing himself round with wonderful agility, dash at the dog, and strike out with his paws in much the same manner as a cat; but Paijas, being up to these manœuvres, always took care to beat a timely retreat.

By a dog thus incessantly harassing a bear, the sportsman is enabled to make many a short cut; his continual attacks, besides, often bring the beast to a stand-still; in which case, one can generally approach within range of him.

When a dog is dodging about a bear in the manner of which I speak, the sportsman should be careful how he fires, or the poor animal may get hit by an ill-directed ball. Indeed, on more

than one occasion, I have been much afraid of shooting Paijas, that I have taken the gun from my shoulder without discharging it.

A good dog is an immense safeguard to a person ; as, should he unhappily fall into the jaws of the beast, his faithful follower might be the means of saving his life ; as, on these occasions, the dog seldom hesitates to fix at once upon the bear, and, by so doing, he often succeeds in drawing the attack from his master to himself.

High-couraged dogs are not unfrequently killed by the bear during the chase ; for, if the beast once gets them within his grasp, he in most cases quickly annihilates them. Several instances of the kind have come to my knowledge.

It is said, that when the bear is pursued by dogs, he at times becomes so much enraged, that he takes hold of the nearest stick or stone he can lay his paws upon, and casts it at them. According to Mr. Nilsson, indeed, when the bear is attacked by the hunter, and whilst beating a retreat, (I wish it was my luck never to find him a more formidable opponent,) he satisfies himself by throwing these missiles at his adversary. It is reported, that the beast is a bad marksman ; for, instead of sending his weapon in the direction of his enemy, he not unfrequently whizzes it over his own head. As I never witnessed exploits of the kind on the part of Bruin, I am by no means inclined to vouch for the truth of such stories.

Though a young bear will occasionally take to a tree, in the event of its being attacked, it very rarely occurs that an old one will thus shelter itself from its pursuers. But this happened to Svensson on one occasion. He was chasing the beast on skidor, when, all of a sudden, he lost his tracks; but, on looking upwards, he saw the shaggy monster seated among the branches of the pine; his trusty rifle, however, soon made him bite the dust, or rather the snow: this was very deep at the time; so that when the animal fell to the ground, he was so completely enveloped with that covering, that only one of his hind-feet was visible above it.

A circumstance of the like kind once occurred to the celebrated chasseur, near to Hjerpleden, of whom I have elsewhere made mention. The bear, during the chase, took refuge in a tree; but, on the man's firing, he tumbled down; not headlong, like Svensson's, but with his hind-quarters in advance, catching hold, as he fell, of the small branches of the pine; these being insufficient to support his weight, he tore them from the trunk in his descent, so that, by the time he reached the ground, he had his arms full of boughs. The beast, however, was not very desperately wounded, the ball having missed his vitals: when therefore he arrived on terra firma, he lost no time in getting on his legs and dashing at the man; but as the hunter was an admi-

rable runner upon skidor, he fortunately succeeded, though with considerable difficulty, in eluding his clutches. Subsequently, the man destroyed the beast.

Though I usually carried only a simple stick in each of my hands when chasing the bear on skidor, I on one or two occasions substituted a light spear in their stead. This was constructed of some tough wood, and was about seven feet in length; the blade was provided with a case made of ox-hide, to prevent injury to myself, or other persons. This covering, however, was affixed to the weapon in so simple a manner, that in a second or two, I could throw it on one side and be ready for action.

The Laplanders, as well as the inhabitants of the more northern Swedish provinces, are usually provided with similar spears when pursuing a bear or other animal upon their skidor; but the chasseurs of Wermeland and the adjacent parts never made use of those weapons. This was from thinking their weight an incumbrance, and that they could get on faster and better in broken ground without them; they therefore trusted to their heels alone for safety, in the event of coming into contact with these beasts.

The spears the Laplanders carry in their hands when upon skidor are usually very slight: when they purpose attacking a bear in his den with

those weapons, a practice not uncommon among that people, they are of a much stouter description; the shaft of the spear, besides, is then cased with iron, to prevent the beasts from tearing them to pieces with their fangs. I have now such an one in my possession.

No one in Wermeland and the adjacent parts thought it worth while to attempt running down the wolf* on skidor, which was owing to the deeply-wooded and broken nature of the country, as well as to those animals usually taking to roads or pathways, in the event of their being pursued. In Lapland, and other more open parts of Scandinavia, nevertheless, these pernicious beasts are frequently destroyed by that means.

If a man be upon skidor when he attacks a bear, and at all near to the animal, he should never allow these implements to be pointed towards him, as, in the event of an attack, he has no time to turn about and get out of the way; they should, on the contrary, be in some measure

* Mr. Rae Wilson, when speaking of the wolf, says very marvelously,—“Of one fact, incredible as it may at first appear, I was assured by most respectable authority in the capital, that, two years before, they had seized several girls about sixteen years of age. These attacks are said to be made with the fore-paws, and the mouth is not used until they have mastered their victim. They then suck the blood, and afterwards drag the carcass to their dens. Should the way lie up-hill, or through bushes, that prevent them from dragging it, they are observed to take the carcass in their fore-paws, and walk with it on their hind-legs only.”

parallel with the beast ; so that, when he sees the storm coming he may push on one side. If the bear misses his first dash, he most commonly takes himself off ; though sometimes he will pursue a man, let him proceed in what direction he may.

In attacking a bear, a man ought always to keep the higher ground ; for, should he be below the animal when he fires, and his ball not take effect in a vital part, it is very probable the beast will dash towards him at the top of his speed. If, on the contrary, he be above him, he is the better enabled to get out of the way in the event of an attack. It is said, besides, that when the bear sees his opponent has the vantage-ground, he seldom makes any hostile attempt.

It is asserted that, if a man meet a lion, and has the presence of mind to look him full in the face, the animal becomes cowed, and usually takes himself off. I do not know if this will hold good with the bear ; few people, I apprehend, having tried the experiment. Jan Finne says that he can tell by the eye of that animal if he be savage, or the contrary ; and that, should the beast once steadily look at him, he knows he is not afraid, and he therefore keeps a respectable distance.

If a man purposes attacking a bear at close quarters, a double gun is decidedly the best ; if it be in the winter-season, a detonator is very preferable. Owing to having flint locks, both my barrels, as I have shown, missed fire, one on an

occasion, which might have been attended with most serious consequences : a large ball is very desirable. The best points to hit a bear, or any other animal, are in the forehead, in the breast, under the ear, or at the back of the shoulder : bullets placed in other parts of the body of an old bear usually have little immediate effect. If the snow be deep, and the bear is crossing a man, he should always aim very low ; he must often, indeed, fire into the snow, if he expects to hit the heart of the beast.

The *chasse* of the bear on skidor is certainly attended with some degree of danger ; for, in the event of the animal coming end on at a man in close cover, it is not easy on such unwieldy machines to get out of the way. The bear, it is true, generally runs at the sight of a person ; but if he be wounded, he frequently turns, and, as has been seen, inflicts a terrible vengeance upon his assailants. I have heard of several men having been killed ; and many is the poor fellow that I have met with in different parts of Scandinavia, who has been desperately injured by these beasts.

An old chasseur, near to Gefle, named Jäderström, assured me that on one occasion, a party of seven Finns and Laps attacked a bear upon their skidor, but they did not succeed in destroying the beast until five of them were severely wounded : one of them was entirely scalped. Jäderström

was not present himself on this occasion, but he saw the bear and the wounded men brought down from the forest.

Lieutenant Oldenburg mentioned several instances of people having been wounded by bears when pursuing them on skidor, that came within his own knowledge. A peasant, indeed, with whom he once lodged in the parish of Öra, in Jemptland, had been severely lacerated by one of these beasts.

This man, in company with several others, was in pursuit of the animal; but being the best runner of the party, he was the first to come up with him, when, discharging his rifle, he severely wounded the beast. The latter, in his turn, now rushed at the hunter, who, to save himself, wheeled about and endeavoured to get out of the way; he presently, however, came to a little precipice, or steep declivity, down which he tumbled headlong, and in a moment afterwards the bear was on him. The ferocious beast now quickly tore out one of his eyes, and otherwise wounded him severely in the body; he bit him so badly, besides, in the hand, that he ever afterwards lost the use of three of his fingers. It is probable, indeed, he would have killed him, had not his companions at last come to the brow of the precipice, when, seeing the bear seated upon the poor fellow's body, they immediately shot him through the head.

On another occasion, when Lieutenant Oldenburg was in the parish of Torp, in Norrland, he saw a chasseur brought down from the forest who had been most desperately wounded by a bear.

This man, as in the instance just narrated, from being some distance in advance of his party, was alone when he fired at and wounded the animal. On receiving the ball, the brute turned upon him; when, being unable to escape, and having neither knife nor other weapon, he grappled with him, and both soon came to the ground. Here a most desperate struggle took place, which lasted for a very considerable time; sometimes the man, who was a most powerful fellow, being uppermost, and at others the bear; but from loss of blood and exhaustion the chasseur was at last necessitated to give up the contest; when, turning on his face in the snow, he pretended to be dead. The bear, on this, quietly seated himself on his body, in which situation, it was thought, he remained for near half an hour; at length the sufferer's companions came up, when, observing his deplorable situation, they shot the beast through the heart.

When Lieutenant Oldenburg saw the unhappy man, his face, breast, arms, and legs were all a mass of blood; but, though so terribly mauled, he had the good fortune eventually to recover.

It is a commonly-received opinion, that she-

bears with cubs are the most dangerous; but even these do not always turn upon their assailants. On two occasions, I have been immediately near to, and wounded these animals when thus circumstanced, without their attempting to molest me; indeed, on the contrary, though both might readily have got hold of me, they left their cubs to their fate, and made their best efforts to escape. In one of these instances, I was quite alone. She-bears with cubs will, it is true, often attack people; but, generally speaking, the old males are the most savage. These very generally turn upon their opponents, if they are wounded. They are, besides, the more to be dreaded, from their enormous prowess.

I was myself in some danger from one of these fellows during the last winter. I shall detail the particulars, which may not be altogether uninteresting. This animal had, for some time previously, committed very great ravages among the cattle in the line of forest situated between the river Klar and Dal. During the preceding summer, indeed, he was said to have slaughtered upwards of twenty horses alone. He was the terror of the people in those parts.

Very fortunately, my man Elg, in his rambles through the forest at the setting-in of the winter, fell in with and ringed the tracks of this beast; this was no considerable distance from

the northern extremity of Moss-sjön, the lake of which I have more than once spoken; but as at that time there was little snow in the forest, we left him undisturbed until the week before Christmas.

At the latter period, Elg and myself proceeded quite alone to the ring, which we searched in our usual silent and cautious manner; but it was not until the evening of the second day, owing to the circle being of a great extent, that we met with the beast; he, however, was so much on his guard, that, before we observed his lair, he bolted from it and moved off. At this time, the fellow was not more than twenty paces distant; but, owing to the trees being loaded with snow, I only got the merest glimpse possible of him. I nevertheless fired one of my barrels, which was charged with two balls, but the brake was so thick, that one, if not both of them, was interrupted by the intervening trees, and, in consequence, he escaped unhurt.

It would have been useless to give chase at this time, for there was too much snow on the ground to enable us to move with any expedition on foot, and too little to make use of skidor to advantage; we therefore thought it best to let the beast go off without farther molestation. In the course of the two following days, however, we again succeeded in ringing him; though this was not until he had

proceeded some nine or ten miles farther to the northward. Here, for a while, we allowed him to rest in quiet.

On the first of last January we experienced a very heavy storm of snow, which continued with little intermission for the succeeding three days : on its cessation, the ground was covered with that substance to the depth of from two to three feet. We now thought it time for action ; and on the 5th of that month, the weather being fine and frosty, we proceeded to the new ring, which was at no great distance from the Finnish hamlet of Näsberg, in the hopes that fortune might prove more propitious.

On this, as on the former occasion, we were, I may say, alone ; for, though Svensson, whom we had fallen in with at Näsberg, and another peasant, followed upon our track, with an axe and a little provision, it being uncertain where we might quarter for the night, only Elg and myself were armed with guns. In this instance we had Hector along with us.

We were now, of course, provided with our skidor. Though the greater part of the snow had so recently fallen, yet, owing to the storm having been accompanied by a very heavy gale of wind, it had, from drifting, obtained such a consistency, that those machines did not run very much amiss. The looseness of the snow told both ways ; for though it was far from being in a favourable state

for our skidor, yet we were certain the bear, when roused, must, from his great bulk, sink to the ground at every step. In point of fact, however, I believe my people were little hopeful of our meeting with success on this occasion; but, as I thought, that even should he escape us for the time, there was no great harm done, I determined on giving him a gallop.

As a fortnight had now elapsed since we had chased the bear near to Moss-sjön, we thought it not improbable that his fears might, by this time, have in some degree subsided, and that we might be enabled to steal upon him whilst in his lair. Ordering Svensson and the other peasant, therefore, to remain without the ring, which was of an inconsiderable size, Elg and myself proceeded to look for the beast. That our movements might be effected with the greater silence on this occasion, we divested ourselves of our skidor, and proceeded on foot.

The fatigue of getting along was now very great, for, in many places where the snow had drifted, we sank down nearly to our middles; the snow, besides, was hanging in such masses on the trees, that, in the closer brakes, we could hardly see more than a pace or two ahead. These would have been very trifling evils, had our manœuvre succeeded: but this, unfortunately, was not the case; for the bear, from some cause or other, had taken the alarm, and, long before we

fell in with his lair, which occupied the whole surface of an immense ant-hill, he had bolted from it.

We now lost as little time as possible in rejoining the people, when, resuming our skidor, we instantly gave chase to the bear at our best pace. Though Elg and myself, when on foot, waded through the snow with so much labour and difficulty, the bear, from his enormous strength, and the wide spread of his feet, was enabled to make his way through it with apparent ease and facility. He did not, however, proceed at a gallop, excepting in particular places, to which, indeed, I suppose he was unequal; but he still managed to shuffle forward at no contemptible pace.

Had the fellow now held to an open line of country, I apprehend we should soon have run him down. But he had too much wit; and, instead of thus exposing himself, he held to the most broken and precipitous ground, and to the thickest and most tangled brakes in the forest: in consequence of this, our course was naturally much impeded. This was bad enough; though still, if Hector had stood well to the animal, we might, in all probability, soon have come up with him; but, after pursuing the beast for some little distance, the dog fell to heel, and thus was of no manner of service.

These were discouraging circumstances; but, still hoping for the best, we continued to push

forward at the top of our speed. At last, after the chase had continued for almost three hours, and after we had been contending for some time with rising ground, we reached the summit of a considerable elevation. From hence we had the gratification of viewing the object of our pursuit at about two hundred paces distance, as he was making his way across a newly-made svedgefäll that lay on the slope of the hill below us. At this point, the snow had drifted very much, and was from three to four feet in depth; and, in consequence, the beast had literally to wade through it. We now dashed forward at our best pace, in the hopes of being able to intercept him before he should reach a thick brake on the opposite side of the svedgefäll, towards which he was making; but finding we could not accomplish this object in sufficient time, I halted when I had advanced to within about seventy paces of him, and levelled my rifle. In this instance, however, I played a most stupid part; for, though I had ample time to fire, I delayed so long in attempting to take a certain aim, that the fellow slipped into the thicket and disappeared without my having pulled the trigger. The fact was, his hind-quarters were principally exposed to me, where a bullet of course would have had but little effect. This was a sad mishap, and from vexation I felt almost inclined to smash my gun to pieces.

A delay of about three or four minutes now took place, in consequence of Elg having to return some little distance for the case of my rifle, which we had cast upon the ground when we first viewed the bear. In this interim, the peasant coming up with our knapsack, we indulged ourselves with a dram and a crust of bread, which was of no little service in recruiting our exhausted strength.

We then resumed the chase; but the animal having the start of us, we for a long while saw nothing more of him. We now began to be apprehensive that, for this day at least, we had seen the last of the beast. Elg indeed said it was next to useless continuing the pursuit; but not caring to throw a chance away, I determined to persevere until nightfall.

Thus disappointed, we continued to drag ourselves along as fast as our jaded condition would permit, and until after the shades of evening had set in. At last, however, when we were in a rather open part of the forest, the object of our pursuit suddenly reared himself up from among a cluster of small pines situated on a little eminence at some twenty-five paces in advance of us, and presented himself to our view. I now lost no time in slipping my double gun out of its case, when as the fellow was slowly retreating among the bushes, I discharged both my barrels at him almost at the same instant. On receiving

my fire, the monster, with his jaws distended, partially swung himself round, when, growling furiously, he seemed as if he was on the point of dashing towards us. But the snow, thereabouts was unusually deep, which, coupled with the state of exhaustion he must naturally have been in from the long run we had given him, caused him probably to alter his determination, and, instead of attacking us, he continued his retreat. This was perhaps fortunate; for, as he had the vantage-ground, and we were encumbered with our skidor, it might have been difficult for us to have got out of his way.

Svensson and the other peasant now shortly came up, when, after reloading my gun, and making the locks as water-proof as possible in my usual manner, namely, by means of a candle-end that I carried about me for the purpose, we lost no time in following up the bear, which was evidently much wounded, as we saw by his tracks being deeply marked with blood.

As it was the post of danger, I now led the way; Elg and the peasants following in my wake. Thus we proceeded for some distance, until we came to a very thick and tangled brake. Having a suspicion that the beast might have sheltered himself here, I made a little *detour* around his tracks, and succeeded in ringing him. I now lost not a moment in taking off my skidor; for, in the event of an attack in close cover, these

machines, as I have said, are highly dangerous, and advanced on foot into the thicket.

But I had not proceeded more than two or three paces, when a most terrific and lengthened growl announced that the bear was still in existence ; and the next moment, and at only some ten or twelve paces distance, the quantity of snow which was hanging in the trees having prevented me from previously observing him, I viewed the fellow dashing forward at the full gallop ; fortunately, I was not altogether taken by surprise, for my double gun was not only out of its case, but both the locks were on the full-cock. This was well, for the beast came at such a rattling pace, that, by the time I had discharged my second barrel, he was within less than a couple of paces of the muzzle of my gun. When I fired my last shot, he was not coming directly towards me ; for either my first had turned him, which the people asserted was the case,—or he did not observe us, owing to the closeness of the cover. By swerving my body to one side, however, for I had no time to move my feet, he luckily passed close alongside of me, without offering me any molestation. This, indeed, I apprehend, was out of his power ; for, after receiving the contents of my last barrel, he slackened his pace, and by the time he had proceeded some few steps farther, life was extinct, and he sank to rise no more.

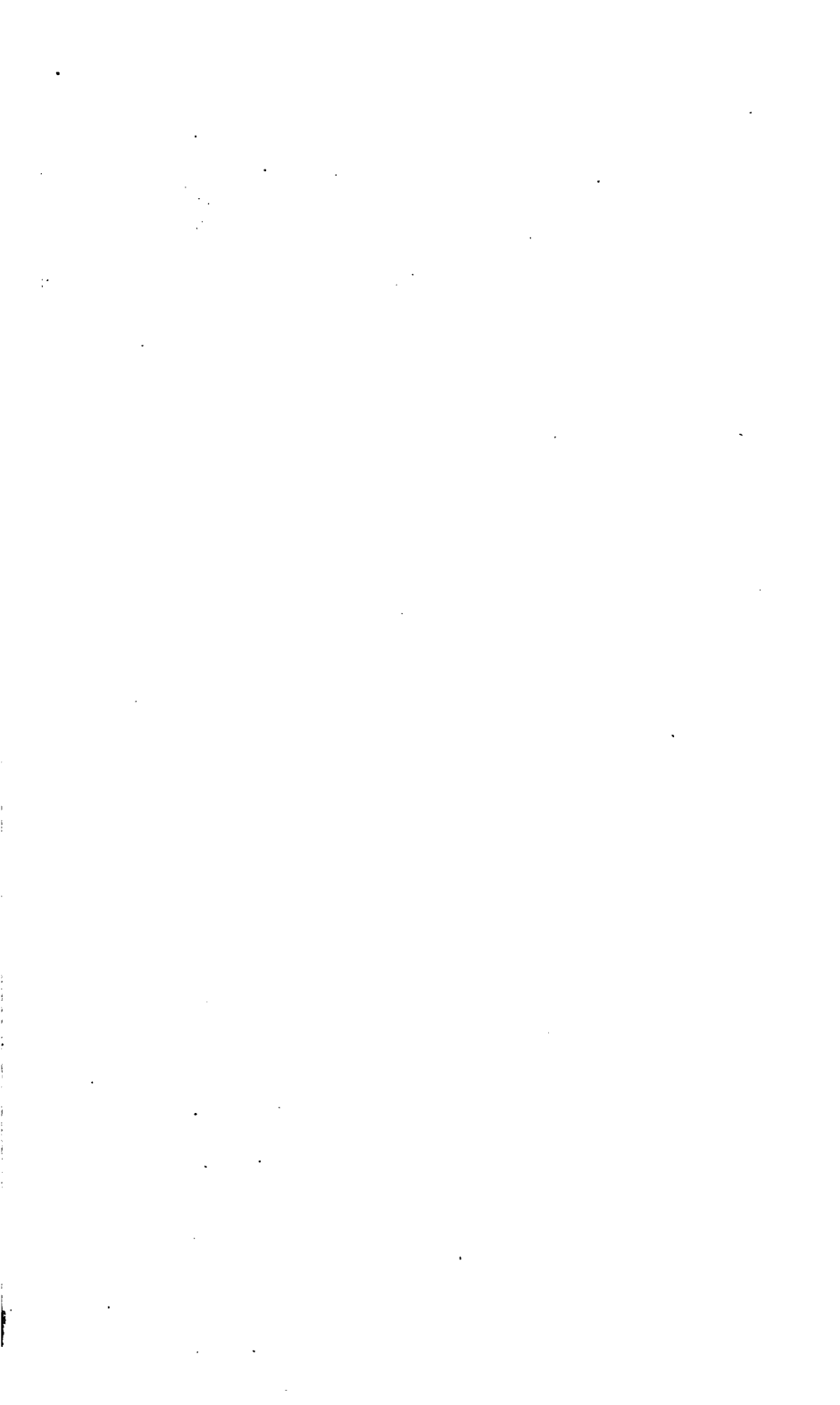
The annexed print will give some idea of what

AN ENRAGED and BADLY WOUNDED BEAR SHOT by THE AUTHOR.

Drawn on Stone by W. H. Burgess

Printed by C. H. Burman





I have just been describing ; but it has been necessary, to introduce rather different scenery from the reality ; as, if the brake where the affair took place were faithfully delineated, neither men nor animals could have been depicted ; the snow, besides, was very deep under-foot.

Elg, who was only a short distance from me, behaved very well on this occasion ; for, though my rifle was in readiness in his hand, he refrained, agreeably to my previous instructions, from discharging it. My orders to him were, as I have said, only to fire in the event of the bear actually having me in his gripe ; and to these directions, which few other men, under the circumstance, would probably have attended to, he paid obedience.

Our prize proved to be an immense male bear ; I subsequently caused him to be conveyed to Uddeholm, a distance of between forty and fifty miles, when we ascertained his weight to be four hundred and sixty English pounds. This, it must be recollected, was after a severe run, during which he had probably wasted not a little ; and also, that it was in the winter-time, when, from his stomach being contracted, he was naturally very much lighter than he would have been during the autumnal months ; in point of fact, had this bear been slaughtered during the latter period of the year, his weight would probably have been between five and six hundred pounds.

On opening this beast, thirty-six hours after his death, and during the intermediate time he had been exposed to the open air, when the temperature was pretty severe, we found that, owing to his excessive exertion, nearly the whole of the fat of his intestines was in a state of liquefaction, and in consequence we were necessitated to scoop it out with a cup. I have already made mention of this circumstance when speaking of the *chasse* of the bear during the summer season.

On taking the skin from the beast, we found he had received my eight bullets: for, though I only fired four times, I had on each occasion two running balls in either barrel. The balls from the two first discharges (as it was supposed) took effect rather high up in his side, the point exposed to me; those from the third were received in the animal's mouth, as he was coming with distended jaws towards us, when they carried away half his tongue and one of his fangs; whilst those from the fourth discharge passed either through or immediately near to his heart, and caused his almost instant dissolution.

By the time the chase was concluded, both Elg and myself were nearly exhausted from fatigue. For the health of the former, indeed, I began to feel some apprehension, for, though we hardly remained stationary for five minutes, owing to his blood cooling too suddenly, he began to tremble like an aspen leaf. He wore a linen shirt, the

greatest of all evils in cold countries, which was probably the cause of it ; for I myself, being provided with flannel, suffered no inconvenience of the like nature. A little brandy, however, which we had still remaining in the flask, soon renovated our worn-out frames.

It was not far from dark when the chase concluded ; and as the weather was rather severe, and we were careless of bivouacking in the forest, after our recent exertion, we left the bear where he had fallen, and at once made the best of our way to Näsberg, whence we were only a few miles distant ; but owing to the darkness, and to our being unacquainted with the way, it was three hours after sunset before we reached that hamlet.

Though Svensson had been in at the death of more bears than almost any man in Scandinavia, he stated that he had never seen but one equally large as that which we had just annihilated ; this fellow was nearly giving him a broken head. The circumstances were these.

Along with five or six other chasseurs he was chasing the beast on his skidor, when, after the run had continued for a time, and after the animal had been slightly wounded, the latter took refuge in a close brake. The cover was here, excessively thick, which, together with the trees being deeply loaded with snow, rendered it almost impenetrable. Svensson and his companions did not in consequence deem it prudent farther to molest the

monster in such a situation, and for a while therefore they endeavoured by shouts to drive him from his position ; but as he remained immovable, in spite of their cries, their patience became exhausted, and they determined, let the consequences be what they might, upon attacking him at close quarters.

For this purpose they all took off their skidor, when Svensson leading the way, the rest following closely upon his tracks, the party advanced silently and cautiously into the thicket. Here they soon descried their shaggy antagonist, when discharging their rifles in concert, they succeeded in severely wounding him ; but their balls not taking effect in any vital part, only tended to enrage the beast, who wheeling about on the instant, made towards them at the top of his speed ; by throwing themselves on one side, however, they very fortunately avoided the onset ; and the bear passing within a pace or two of them, betook himself to another part of the forest, without in any manner molesting them. They had a very narrow escape on this occasion, for the animal was so near to them, that some of the snow which he knocked from the trees in his progress, actually fell on their persons. They attributed their safety, as was doubtless the case, to the density of the brake, rendered doubly so by the masses of snow hanging in the trees, having concealed them from the view of their ferocious assailant.

This bear made good his retreat from Svensson and his companions on this particular occasion, but some days afterwards they were fortunate enough to destroy him. He had near a hundred weight of fat about him.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Chase of the Elfdal Bear.

ON a second occasion I was also in some danger from another capital male bear: as in the last instance, I shall relate the particulars at length.

This animal was accidentally roused from his den, in the winter season, by some peasants who were felling timber in the forest, in the parish of Ny, in Elfdal; but after he had proceeded a short distance, he again laid himself down in the wilderness, for the purpose, doubtless, of reposing during the remainder of that inclement season; and here he was ringed, or encircled. This beast was supposed to be an old marauder, that for several preceding years had committed great ravages among the cattle in that part of the country; this being the case, his death was devoutly to be wished for, and those who had ringed him deemed it more advisable to get up a skull than to attempt his destruction by other means. Such being the case, information was sent to Mr. Falk,

who in consequence ordered out four or five hundred men.

I was present at this battue, which took place at about five or six miles to the eastward of Lindebohl; but as no circumstance of particular interest occurred, I shall confine myself to stating, that soon after the cordon was formed around the beast, and after several shots had been fired at him, he became desperate, and, dashing through the ranks, for that time made good his retreat.

After the bear had escaped from the skull, he made across the country, in nearly a direct line, about fourteen miles to the southward, and here he was once more encircled by the peasants.

This intelligence was soon conveyed to Mr. Falk, who thereupon ordered out six or seven hundred men to form a second skull for the destruction of the animal. But prior to this taking place, the beast, either from disliking his new quarters, or from being disturbed, deserted them; when, striking through the forest in a north-easterly direction, he did not again lie down until he was within seven or eight miles of Ytter Malung, in Dalecarlia. As it was not very practicable, however, to get up a battue in that province, and as the point where he was now ringed was far too distant from the more habitable parts of Wermeland to collect a sufficient number of people together, the chances of destroying the beast by that, or perhaps other means, became very problematical.

From this cause, therefore, the peasants sold me all right and title to the animal, which they had hitherto refused doing, for a trifling consideration.

In the part of the country where the skall of which I have just spoken took place, there was very little snow upon the ground ; but in the district where the bear was now ringed it was considerably deeper. From this circumstance I entertained great hopes that, by seizing a favourable opportunity, (the snow being then in too loose a state for the purpose,) I might be enabled to run him down on my skidor. Under this idea, I took up my quarters at Gästjénberg, the solitary residence of a peasant, situated to the eastward of Näsberget, and at some six or seven miles distance from where the bear was then lying. This was the nearest habitation to the beast, who was ringed in a very wild and savage range of forest called *Tio mil Skogen*, or the seventy miles wood ; so designated from its extending that distance north and south, without, I believe, the intervention of a single house.

For several days prior to this period we had experienced partial thaws, the weather being unusually mild for the season of the year ; but at last a slight frost set in. Thinking that the snow had now attained a sufficient consistency for our purpose, I took Elg and Svensson along with me, and set off one morning, at the first dawn of day, on my skidor for the ring.

Though during the time that had elapsed since the bear had been last on foot, much new snow had fallen, Bruin's tracks, in most places, were still very visible ; on reaching the ring, therefore, which was of great extent, we followed them with all imaginable silence. This was not exactly under the notion that we should be enabled to steal upon the beast, before he was roused from his lair, as, from his having been already so much disturbed, we had reason to suppose he was far too much on his guard, to allow of our near approach, but that we might at all events have something like a fair start when he should bolt from his den.

Thus we proceeded for an hour or more ; but our progress was slow, as in places the tracks of the brute were nearly imperceptible ; and in others it was very difficult to distinguish the right one, in consequence of the *doubles* that he had made. Much snow had fallen during the preceding day, and a great deal was hanging in the trees. This was unfortunate for our purpose, for as there was only a degree or two of cold, and the morning was clear, by the time the sun rode pretty high in the heavens, the snow began to melt, and the water in consequence to drip from the foliage. Seeing this to be the case, and knowing that in a very short time the snow under foot would be in such a state as to render it impossible for us to make much expedition on our

skidor, in the event of our getting the bear on foot, I deemed it more advisable to leave him for that time in quiet possession of his quarters, and to wait until a more favourable opportunity should offer, to attempt his destruction.

We now, therefore, retraced our steps out of the ring; but as the distance to Gästjénberg was considerable, after proceeding to some little distance, that we might not alarm the bear, we got up a bivouac in our usual manner, where we determined to remain until the following day, in the hope that the weather might prove more propitious.

During the succeeding night, however, we experienced a heavy storm of snow; and as we were without covering of any kind, we passed it rather uncomfortably. Seven or eight inches of that substance fell, and as this, owing to the warmth of the fire, melted on our persons as it came down, we were thoroughly wet through by the following morning. This storm, nevertheless, would have been a trifling evil, had it not interfered with the object we had in view; but besides that the trees were now loaded with snow, the latter was so loose underfoot that we could only plough our way through it with great difficulty. This being the case it would have been almost madness to start the bear; for had we not succeeded in stealing upon him whilst in his lair—a very improbable thing, as I

have said, from his known shyness, there was no kind of chance of our subsequently being able to run him down; and besides this, it was not impossible but that if once on foot he might betake himself to the southward, or to the line of country whence he had originally come from, where there was little snow upon the ground, and where, in consequence, we could not have used our skidor to any advantage. For these reasons we thought it best to leave the animal undisturbed.

After my people, therefore, had once more made the circuit of the ring, for the purpose of ascertaining if the beast was still within it, for we were rather apprehensive we might have approached too near to his lair on the preceding day, and that he in consequence had moved himself off, we reluctantly turned our backs upon him and retraced our steps homewards. In our progress through the forest, however, we had not the most agreeable time of it, for owing to the mildness of the weather, the snow adhered in masses to our skidor; and from the like cause it became dissolved upon the trees, whence the water dripped as from a shower-bath.

On the succeeding day we experienced some little cold, and the snow in consequence became in tolerable order; thinking it therefore time for action, we again set off, as the evening was closing in, for the vicinity of the ring. We

thought it best, for two reasons, to pass the night in the forest; one, that we might not tire ourselves too much before the chase commenced; the other, that we might be enabled to rouse the bear as soon as it was well daylight. It was very desirable to adopt the latter course, which, from the distance, would not have been very practicable had we started in the morning from Gästjénberg; for owing to southerly winds, and the comparative mildness of the weather, we could not calculate upon the snow remaining in tolerable order for our skidor for any considerable length of time after the sun was above the horizon.

In this instance we passed the night in our bivouac far from uncomfortably; the weather was clear and calm, and as we had a capital fire we suffered little inconvenience from the cold.

The following morning was fine and slightly frosty. Soon after daylight therefore, and after partaking of a plentiful repast, we set off for the ring, which was situated at an inconsiderable distance from our watch-fire. On this, as on the former occasion, I was only accompanied by Elg and Svensson. I was armed with my double gun and Elg with my rifle; but Svensson, who was the bearer of our kit of provisions was provided with no other weapon than an axe. We had a very tolerable dog called Jägare along with us; but though he stood well to a bear for a while,

he was nothing equal to Paijas in his better days. He came from Lapland.

As we had traversed fully the one half of the ring when we were there on the previous occasion, and in consequence there remained no very great extent of ground to go over, we fully anticipated soon getting the bear on foot. In this we were not disappointed, for we had not proceeded far, when coming to a thick and tangled brake, Jägare evinced by his eagerness and agitation that the animal of which we were in search was not far distant. On seeing this we pushed forward in the direction indicated by the dog, but when we reached the lair of the beast we found it deserted, he having the instant before, as we had reason to suppose, wisely taken himself off. We now slipped Jägare from his couplings, who making after the bear, was soon only to be heard in the distance.

Though the snow, as I have remarked, was pretty deep on the ground in this part of the forest, the bear dashed through it at the full gallop with the most perfect facility ; but it was in pretty good order for our skidor, so that though Elg and myself (for Svensson followed at some distance on our tracks), could not keep up with him, we were enabled to push forward at a very tolerable rate. After the animal however had gone about a couple of miles, and when he came to a part of the forest where the snow was

looser and deeper than in that which he had hitherto traversed, he slackened his pace and proceeded at a long trot. At the commencement Jägare stood well to the bear, but though we heard his challenges in the distance, we were not enabled to make any short cuts from the beast striking through the country in nearly a direct line. After a time we came up with the dog, who had partly discontinued the pursuit, and who thenceforth kept so little in advance as to render us but trifling assistance.

For a while we saw nothing of the bear, but when the chase had continued for upwards of an hour we got a glimpse of him at about forty paces distance; he was facing up a deeply-wooded, and rather abrupt acclivity overhanging a small glade, or opening in the forest, along which we were then pursuing our way; but our sight of him was so transitory that before we could get our guns out of their cases he was lost to our view. We had now to ascend the rising ground over which the beast had betaken himself, but as it was rather steep, we lost some time before we surmounted it, and he in consequence again got a little the start of us.

After the lapse of about half an hour more, however, and as we emerged from among the trees on to a little plain or morass, we had once more the gratification to espy our game at about one hundred paces in advance of us, as he was

slowly making his way across this opening in the forest for a rather lofty and precipitous chain of hills which were situated on its opposite side. I was not in the habit, as I have said, of allowing my people to make use of their arms on these occasions, but being apprehensive that this bear, whose death on every account was so much to be desired, might possibly escape us, owing to the season being advanced, the state of the snow, &c. I ordered Elg, who carried my rifle, to send a bullet after him. The hind-quarters of the beast were at this time towards us, and I had not therefore an expectation of its being attended with any serious results; but I still thought it probable that if he were wounded, his progress would be so much retarded as to allow of my approaching within good range of him with my double gun. In this anticipation I was not disappointed, for, on his receiving Elg's fire—which, by the by, did not do him any actual injury, the ball, as we subsequently ascertained, only grazing the skin of his fore-leg—he became enraged, when, wheeling about, he dashed towards us as fast as he was able. He had not, however, advanced very many paces before he was assailed by Jägare, who, encouraged by our presence, gallantly made at him, and, by attracting his attention, was thus the means of diverting from ourselves the threatened storm. The snow had hereabouts obtained a considerable degree of consistency, for though in

most places the bear sunk a foot or more into it, in others, its surface altogether supported him.

Whilst this was going on, I was not idle, for, leaving Elg to reload his rifle, and with my gun, which I had slipped out of its case, in the one hand; and a stick in the other, the better to impel myself forward, I dashed on my skidor towards the brute. It was a very amusing sight at this time to see the beast, who in appearance was as large as a well-grown pony, as he made his attacks upon the poor dog.

The accompanying sketch will give a good idea of the scene at this period.

When he found his attempts to get hold of the dog were unavailing, he continued his course across the plain, whilst I pushed after him at my best pace. But he did not seem much to notice my approach, his attention being taken up with Jägare, who was hanging close in his rear, until I had advanced to within a short distance of him; and then, instead of attacking me, he became intimidated, when taking to his heels he went off in the opposite direction at the full gallop.

At this period the bear had all but gained the extremity of the little plain, and was on the point of again plunging into the thicket; as I found he was gaining upon me, no time was to be lost, so halting when at about twenty paces distance from him, I quickly levelled and discharged one of my barrels. On receiving my ball, which



Drawn on Stone by T.M. Baynes.

A BEAR DURING THE CHASE UPON THE DOG.

Printed by Chubb & Co.



only slightly wounded him, the beast spun round with the rapidity of a tetotum, when, uttering a terrible growl, he with distended jaws was in the act of dashing towards me; but his career was soon at an end, for taking a snap shot with the other barrel, I had the good fortune to split his skull open, on which he instantly fell dead on the snow.

It was well that my last bullet told properly, or I should have been in an awkward predicament, as now that my gun was discharged, I was without weapon of any kind, and Elg was a long distance in the background.

We were fortunate in putting the beast *hors de combat* thus early in the day, for in the course of an hour afterwards the snow, from the effects of the sun and the mildness of the temperature, adhered in such quantities to our skidor, that we could only get along at a snail's pace. Had we not destroyed the animal, indeed, on this occasion, I am very doubtful whether, owing to the unfavourable state of the weather and snow, we should have been able to run him down upon our skidor during the remainder of the season.

We soon lighted a fire to dry our clothes, which were well saturated with wet from profuse perspiration; and when we were rejoined by Svensson, which was not until an hour or more afterwards, for during the chase he had broken one of his skidor, we skinned and cut up the bear.

He was an enormous fellow, but we had no means of ascertaining his weight, as the part of the forest where he breathed his last was far distant from any habitation.



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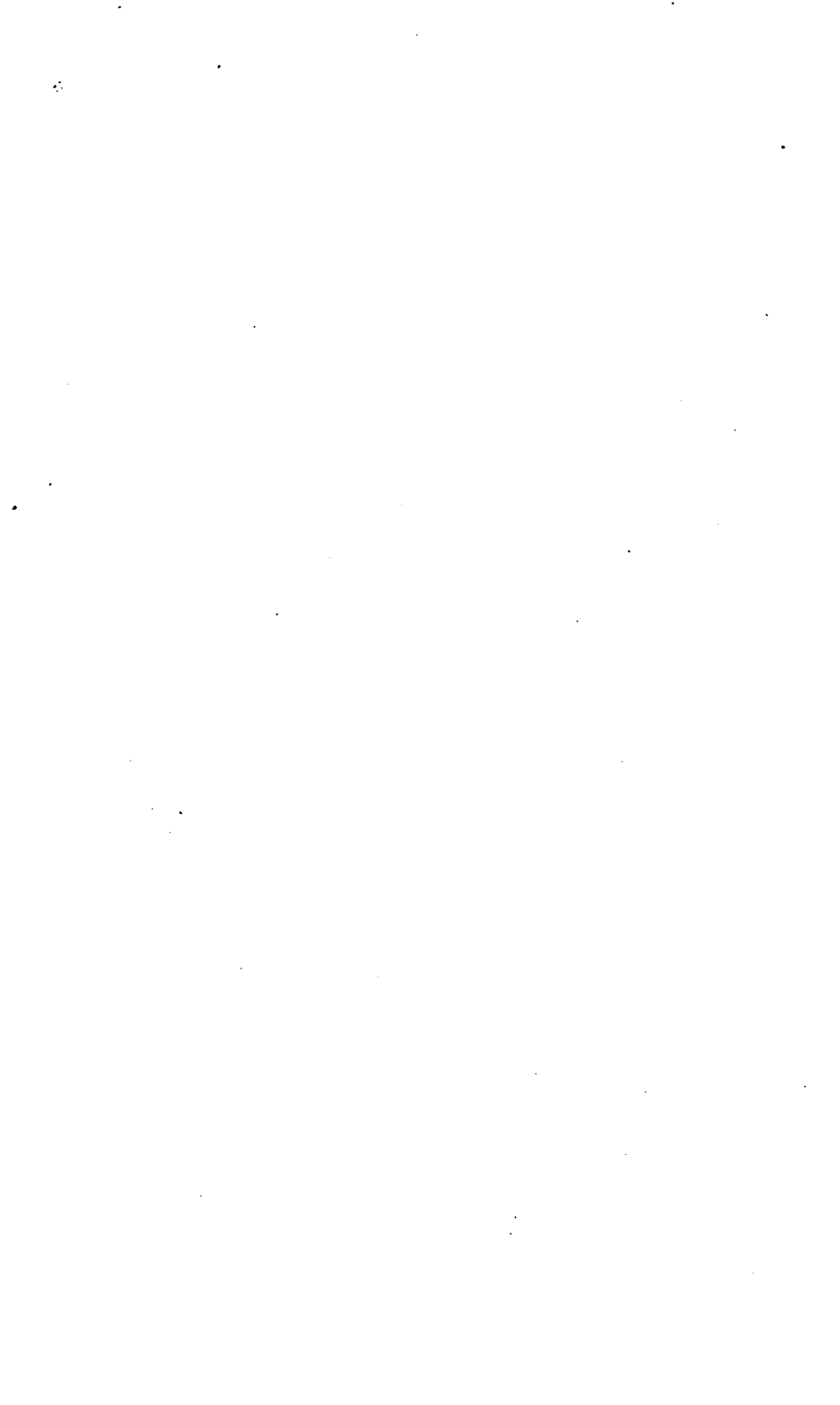
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